AN OUTLANDER IN ENGLAND

J·H·M·ABBOTT

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AN OUTLANDER IN ENGLAND

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AN OUTLANDER IN ENGLAND

BEING SOME IMPRESSIONS OF AN AUSTRALIAN ABROAD

BY

J. H. M. ABBOTT

AUTHOR OF "TOMMY CORNSTALK" ETC.

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TO

NEW AND OLD

" God gave all men all earth to love,
But since our hearts are small,
Ordained for each one spot should prove
Beloved over all;
That as He watched Creation's birth,
So we, in godlike mood,
May of our love create our earth
And see that it is good.

* * * * * *

So to the land our hearts we give
Till the sure magic strike,
And Memory, Use, and Love make live
Us and our fields alike—
That deeper than our speech and thought,
Beyond our reason's sway,
Clay of the pit whence we were wrought
Yearns to its fellow clay."

RUDYARD KIPLING, *Sussex*

PREFACE

NOT a few Englishmen and Englishwomen have put their impressions of Australia in print, after more or less experience of the country and the people in it. A row of their books occupies a shelf in the room in which this is being written, some of which are of value, and some of which are not. The majority of them are inadequate. It is in return for the latter that this volume of inadequacies is inflicted upon the possible reader. Its sternest critic will not be more conscious of its shortcomings than its author is. All that he has to claim for it is that he has endeavoured to be as fair in his criticisms, and as accurate in his descriptions, as he is capable of being. Every man sees the world through differently tinted and differently focussed glasses, and its simplest colours vary with the individual; so that it is not possible for one to say to the

English reader, "This is what Australians think of your country and yourselves," or to the Australian, "This is what the English and their country are like." These pages may only be offered as individual impressions, culled from the wonderful diversity of impressions possible to be obtained in England. They reflect only a very few and not always important aspects, and do not pretend to teach anything. But if, in the slightest degree, they might contribute a little towards helping to establish a more intimate understanding of one another between the people of the Old Land and the people of the New Land, their writer will feel that paper and printer's ink has not been wholly wasted in their publication.

While certain chapters were appearing serially in *The Spectator*, the author was favoured with correspondence from some of the readers of that journal which led him to suppose that he had offended some English susceptibilities. Here, therefore, he would like to record the fact that he has never done so maliciously; and if, in their more amplified form, these chapters should again rub any readers "the wrong way," he would like to remind the latter that, as has

been mentioned above, no one can expect to be wholly in agreement with anyone else at all times. He would say that he is quite ready to admit that he may be just as wrong as they may be right.

As some portion of this book has already appeared in print in *The Spectator*, and some in *The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, N.S.W.), the Author desires to make his acknowledgments to the Editors and Proprietors of both journals.

J. H. M. A.

LONDON, 1905.

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AN OUTLANDER IN ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

THE OLD LAND

AS the great ship swung out into the harbour at noontide—a blazing hot noontide in February,—and the strip of oily water between her side and the quayside slowly widened and widened, it came into one's mind, as something surprisingly strange, that one was shoving off into a new world. The straining tugs, assiduously hauling the hulking liner out into the way of the white-waked ferry traffic, were really lugging one forth into the Unknown. They were gradually establishing a gulf between the shore and the ship which, from slowly growing measurement in yards, was, before many weeks were past, to have widened into an enormous waterway of ten thousand miles in width. The crowd

on the wharf-edge was losing its individual characteristics, and becoming nothing but a recollection of clothes, and faces, and white fluttering handkerchiefs. The whirr and buzz of the electric trams rushing back and forward from city to waterside, and the sharp clang-clang of their warning bells, came last over the increasing distance. The one o'clock gun from the other side of the Circular Quay echoed down the fair-way as a last voice of farewell. As the ship's bows pointed eastwards down towards the Heads, and her ponderous stern swung up to the Parramatta River, she commenced to glide slowly past the end of Point Macquarie, and to open up the broad reach of blue, dazzling waters, flecked with white yacht sails, that stretch to Watson's Bay. The twin screws began to send a shiver through the decks. The steady, dull thump-thump of the engines seemed to make her live beneath one. Gathering speed, she slipped by the little prehistoric fort on Pinch-gut — the Sydney landmark of the Crimean War,—opened up the semicircle of Farm Cove, lifted the towers of Government House over the trees, then the high red front of the Australian Club, and a little later the noble pile of St. Mary's Cathedral. The grey men-o'-war at their anchorage opposite the Gardens

and Mrs. Macquarie's Chair (Larrikin Point) dropped astern. Garden Island—with its ugly naval dockyard buildings and towering pink shear-legs—stood aside to give one a last look into Woolloomooloo Bay ; all the promontories and bays of the tree-bowered eastern suburbs slid past as a moving panorama of white-walled houses standing in sea-washed gardens. On the North Shore the red roofs amongst the dark-leaved eucalyptus made colour between blue waters and blue sky. Presently the white beaches of Rose Bay, and the sandhills towards Bondi, shone out in the strong sunlight. The ship swung round Bradley's Head, and Sydney fell behind. A little afterwards she passed out through the narrow gateway of the Heads themselves, dipped ponderously into the gentle swell that rolls in across the Tasman Sea on to the sandstone walls of New South Wales, and turned slowly to the southward. One looked with a little reluctant envy at an Illawarra collier making inwards.

Then a fellow came on deck and announced luncheon with a bugle. So we went below and smothered our sorrows in food. A meal is an excellent remedy for the melancholy which may assail you on passing out of the gateways of your native land.

All the sunny afternoon the coast slid by

to starboard, seeming to lie asleep in the faint heat-haze of summer. Away beyond the cliffs and beaches where the white surf broke in long shining lines, the Dividing Ranges drowsed through the afternoon — at first far off and faintly blue, but gradually coming closer to the sea as we made south, until at last, in Illawarra, they stood above the beaches to say good-bye. Their tall, timber-clad sides rose and fell in serrated lines. Mountain behind mountain rolled away inland under the dazzling sunlight. In the foreground of the picture was the dancing strip of transparent blue water between ship and shore; then the wide line of breakers and the shining sands; then the green foothills, with the white dairy farms nestling amongst them here and there; then the wooded mountain sides of bluish-green; behind, all the splendid ranges,—and over all the brilliant southern daylight. There are few more beautiful coast-lines than the Illawarra, and none more likely to remain with you afterwards as a fair remembrance, if it has been vouchsafed to you to see it at the last in summer sunshine. And as you lean across the taffrail, smoking, gazing at the hills, and thinking of the world you know behind them, and along their far continuation, you will catch yourself wondering how it could be that you

could ever leave your own land—so fair and beautiful does it seem to-day. You will never see a bleak, rain-swept northern shore afterwards without thinking of the glow and charm of Illawarra. It is a fine impression of your own country to take away with you. It is not the last—but it is the fairest.

Across the farthest and the faintest of the blue ranges lies the real Australia—the wide, open, free, paradoxical Outback—which it is an education to know, and which no man yet knows thoroughly. As you stare across the dazzling waters, and the miles of rolling mountains to the skyline, it is not hard to see what lies behind and out of sight. What you may know of it will all come back.

The long plains—where sometimes the grass grows so high that you may tie it across your saddle, and sometimes are as bare as a city pavement—shimmer and dance in the pitiless sunlight. Between the belts of grey timber the mirage quivers in the heat-haze. In wide shelterless expanses are the clumps of belar whose shade is cool and comforting in the heat of the day. Myall, and wilga, and brigalow —all the trees you know so well wave in the warm breezes—the far back mulga covers the low red ridges in the Never-Never. Over the banks of the meandering western rivers

the giant, ragged gum-trees fling their long arms.

Those river-bends—how they come back to one! And most of all the still, solemn nights —silent, yet strangely noiseful—when the little camp-fires flickered ghostly lights and shadows across the dim white aisles of the tree-trunks, and the tinkle-tinkle of the horse-bells made a sweeter music than any cathedral chimes, and the pin-points of stars twinkled down through the gentle, rustling leaves, and the crickets chirped about the reed beds.

And the dawns,—when the black little quart-pots fizzled on the tiny fire that sent thin, blue, aromatic smoke curling up into the clear air; and the sky reddened quickly to eastward; and the long shafts of golden light that the rising sun sent through the wakening forest to turn each dewdrop on the grass into a blazing diamond; and the sweet music of the magpies, and the mirthful cackle of the good old laughing jackass who bade you "good morning," and the screeches of the big white cockatoos. All the sights, and the sounds, and the scents, and the thoughts of those wide, free, happy days, will come back to you as the big ship draws the miles beneath her bows and pays them out astern, and the coast keeps changing from cliff to beach and rugged headland, and

back again, and you recognise that it is most that you have ever cared about that ever falls behind, and writes itself down in an account which you can never alter.

There were the little "townships" of one street and illimitable environment, that lay off the railway lines—with their half-dozen public-houses, and their three churches, and their two banks, and their couple of stores. And there was all the quaint society that belonged to them—the fine equality of it, and its curious division into castes and little cliques. There were the types one knew so well—the police magistrate, the bank manager, the storekeeper who lent money on mortgages to the selectors round about; the clerk of Petty Sessions who was also land agent and registrar of births; the commercial travellers who took possession of the inns; the stock and station agent who did anything that came his way, and once had many acres of his own—before the drought dried them and killed his own stock, and the cruel banks foreclosed. And all the minor characters—the drover who lived on the out-skirts and hardly ever lived there at all, the man in from the back country, the mounted trooper, the coach-driver, the rouseabout, the ne'er-do-well, the loafer, the public school teacher. There was the doctor who might one

night drive fifty miles northward to help a new life into the Bush, and the next sixty miles westward to see what he could do to stop a life from slipping out of it. There were the parson, and the priest, and the minister—who generally had a friendly nod for one another. And there were the women who made the differences, and manufactured their little class distinctions, and kept their "sets"—as women do everywhere.

And there were the great stations round about the little townships—with the big rambling, wide-verandahed, white-roofed homesteads,—where you were always sure of a welcome and a feed for your horse, and a sense of stay-as-long-as-you-like-and-go-away-when-you-want-to. They, too, had their own characteristic types of manhood and womanhood. The men were all sunburned and strong and hard working, and the women capable and self-possessed and independent. From the "Boss" to the latest "colonial-experiencer" you would find them all friends, and all glad to see you, and all sorry when you went away.

And there were the men you met on the roads—the huge drifting population of the Bush, with its multitude of individual varieties. There was the man who droved ten thousand sheep across the long, dry travelling stock routes, and who had as much care and anxiety

over his command as a general of division. There were his underlings, who might be anybodies from anywhere. There were the carriers bringing down wool to the railway, with their twelve-horse teams, and their marvellous capacity for surmounting all kinds of difficulties. There were the shearers, and the "sun-downers," and the insurance agents driving about in sulkies seeking whom they might beguile, and the Indian hawkers, and a host of others too numerous and diverse to catalogue.

Everything lay behind those blue ranges. All that you could look back to and say of "This is my country" was over there under the declining sun. It was to you, above all else, the "old land." And at sixteen knots an hour you were making your way to another that was older than your own by thousands of years, and yet to yourself was new and unexplored and pregnant with possibilities of undiscovered and inexperienced things.

History goes back in Australia just one hundred and seventeen years. That is to say, of course, political history. Before Captain Phillip had formed his unpromising colony of the scum of England in Sydney Cove, our Old Land was in its dark ages. Geological time is what we must reckon in before the 26th of January 1788. The mysterious race who were

the original Australians have left no records that count for anything. Quaint, rude paintings of hands, and sharks, and men and women, in sandstone caves; curly and angular carvings on tree-trunks; roughly shaped ceremonial grounds, of which the meaning is as obscure as the meaning of Stonehenge; the tradition of no traditions at all,—these are all that come to us in explanation of our dark ages. When Dr. Johnson made his dictionary, our country was only beginning to have an existence that was credible. When Swift sent the intrepid Gulliver on his travels, it was barely a rumour. When Oliver Cromwell was engaged in the making of England, the Dutch and the Spaniards knew more about our coastlines than the English. When the foundation-stones of Westminster Abbey were laid, Australia had never been heard of at all. So it may seem to the reader who cares to dip into the pages of this book not a little impertinent and absurd on the part of the author of it to speak about his "old land." But there is this which he would commend to the consideration of that same kind reader—that the country where any man is born is the Old Land to him, whether it have a history of two thousand or of fifty years. If its only ruins are broken-down fences, or the rotting corner posts of stockyards erected a

generation ago, they must be to him the milestones of such civilisation as he knows of. The focus of the vision with which he regards the years behind him may be set to nearer objects than those which the inhabitant of a really older world looks to for the guidance of precedence. He may reckon in decades, as the citizen of an older world reckons in centuries. But, nevertheless, out of his affection for it, his new country, be it never so garishly new, must always be to him the Old Land. He can never really count upon being as much interested in the footprints upon the shores of even the parent country of his country as he is in the more recent tracks that are upon his own. If he be a real Canadian, he will find that the Plains of Abraham appeal more strongly to him than any battlefield in England. If he be an original Transvaal colonist, Thaba N'Chu Mountain will inspire him with more reverence than Runnymede. If he be an Australian, he will have more interest in Captain Cook's landing-place at Botany Bay than in William the Conqueror's point of disembarkation.

And so an outlander sails Englandwards with all that is new before him, and all that is old behind. He knows what he leaves in the past. He has only his reading and hearsay for what is to come in the near future. He has

the ways and the ideas of his own people bred in him. He has to acquire those of the people he is going amongst.

It may seem strange that one should insist upon any possible differences that may be worth remarking in the various component parts of the whole British race. But the root language is really the only thing that is truly common. No better illustration of the truth of this is necessary than the extraordinary diversity of England itself. If a man of Lancashire finds Devonshire curiously different to his own county, how much more so must a man of Africa or Australia or New Zealand find England new to him? History, literature, song—all that is written—may be at his finger ends. But in all that he sees for himself he will find a newness and a strangeness. It is his own lookout whether he comprehends it or not. It rests with him to satisfy himself as to the real nature of the differences he may discover. To an Australian his own country is the old land; England is a new one.

The sun sets over the Shoalhaven Range, which is below the Illawarra. The phosphorescent gleam of the breaking wave that runs outward from the ship's bows loses itself in the darkness. The coast-line becomes a dim and indistinct blur in the night. Only the out-

lines of the distant mountains stand up against the starlit sky. The lights of the open port-holes cast a glow upon the seething waters racing along the ship's side.

Although it is more than a week before the ship finally leaves Australian waters, the real departure from one's own Australia comes home to one most vividly on the evening of the day upon which the port of embarkation is left behind. It is then that one says good-bye to the old land, and sails into the strangeness of the new.

The long voyage lasts through many weeks, and takes one past many lands; but until the green slopes of Devonshire are sighted, it is all merely a pleasant period of transition from old to new. Colombo, Aden, the Canal, wicked Port Said, the blue Mediterranean, Italy, France, Gibraltar—are all pictures in a book. Wonderfully beautiful and interesting illustrations of the world volume, perhaps, but too swiftly passed by to be more than glanced at. It is only as the Bay of Biscay is crossed that one is altogether able to realise one's closeness to the New Land. And it is with a strange feeling of adventure that one wakes up to the cessation of the rhythmic throb of the engines in the early morning of a day nearly six weeks after the sun set behind the Shoalhaven Range. The "new" has at length arrived.

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CHAPTER II

THE NEW LAND

IT was raining when we came to Plymouth, —a thin, cold, comfortless rain which enveloped land and sea in a wet mist. Sometimes the chill breezes lifted the curtain hanging over the shore, so that we had fleeting glimpses of England, and eagerly strained our eyes to see what manner of country it might be,—for, to one of us at least, it was a newly discovered land.

The first impression was of its greenness, the second of its dense population, the third that it had all been recently "ring-barked." When an Australian sees new country his first inward query is, "Will it run sheep?" and the next, "How many sheep to the acre?" This is an ingrained mental habit with all who have had to do with the Bush—a habit so peculiarly strong that it is sometimes a little difficult to restrain its interference with the appreciation of beautiful scenery for its own sake. Your

most typical Australian would inwardly ask the question of Paradise during his first walk through it. It was clear that Devonshire would carry plenty of stock, but why had it been so indiscriminately "rung"? There were a few clumps of dark pine or firs, here and there along the ridges, but for the rest the ring-barker's axe had been busy cutting the circular girdle in the bark that starves trees to death, and is nearly everywhere cut on "improved" lands to-day in Australia. It was only after a minute or two of curious gazing one remembered that here one was in a land where all the timber is not evergreen. One mentions this rather as an explanation of some subsequent points of view which these chapters will contain. So many conditions—social, political, financial, and educational—in an old land are inexplicable and mysterious to anyone from a new one, that the writer often reflects while commenting on some strangely unfamiliar aspect of England and English life—"Well, after all, you thought the trees at Plymouth had been ring-barked." The incident may explain a little of the mystification which many things familiar and common enough to an Englishman carry with them to a newly landed Australian.

But on that cold, March morning, viewed

from the wet decks of a great steamer, England seemed a dull, grey, cheerless, bleak country enough. Up the Channel deep fogs beset us from the Isle of Wight to Gravesend, and, always, tramp steamers, ships, and fishing smacks strove to run into us. So that we came to Tilbury perhaps a little unconsciously prejudiced against the New Land. Had the sun shone brightly,—as we found about a month later that it was possible for it to do,—and the beauties of the south coast been revealed to us, we might have found the situation less cheerless. If you come from a country where, in most years, the sun is visible for three hundred out of the three hundred and sixty-five days, and have voyaged for weeks through brilliantly illuminated tropical seas, and the Mediterranean at its best, Tilbury on a wet day is not the most prepossessing gateway by which to enter England. Nor does the run from Tilbury to Liverpool Street give overmuch promise. It is only when, at dusk, you step out into the wonderful fairyland of London's lights, reflecting countless beauties from the wet pavements, that you first begin to feel that after all it may not be so bad. And then, as you drive for miles through the streets of the chaotic, roaring great city to your hotel, you are taken in the first grip of

that great amazement which never afterwards quite leaves you while you know London.

But it is not so lonely to camp in the middle of a great plain by yourself on a moonlight night, as it is for the first few days after your arrival in London, before you have presented any of your letters of introduction. It is not so lonely to be lying in a firing-line for the first time, with your right- and left-hand neighbour ten yards away, as it is to walk down Oxford Street, thinking, "Amongst all these hurrying millions there isn't one human soul who cares about me, or for whom, as a matter of fact, I care two straws." And these—the great plain and the first firing-line—are the two loneliest situations of which the writer has any personal knowledge. There is no loneliness like the loneliness of a great city, and no great city wherein one may realise the depths of solitude as in London. Is it so in all England, you wonder? Does every Englishman hate and distrust a stranger? Are the only people with whom the outlander may engage in conversation German waiters seeking twopence, or hall-porters similarly anxious for emolument.

There were some letters in a box which had not yet come up from the Docks, and did not come for three days, and those three days were the most solitary of one's life. It was different

in the Bush—where every whistling night-bird, every chirruping cricket in the creek, every scratching 'possum in a gum-tree, was an old friend, whose language and sympathy were to be understood. It was different in the firing-line—for there spoke many wonderful voices of life and death. But there was no man, or beast, or bird, in this huge wilderness, caring or cared for. There could never again be any such hateful solitude.

At a little table in the hotel dining-room the writer sat opposite a well-groomed gentleman of middle age for several meals during those three sad days. "A wet day," he ventured, on the first occasion. "Yes," admitted his *vis-à-vis*, and the conversation languished. From the tone of the "yes" it was obvious that it must needs languish. A genial policeman in Trafalgar Square, of whom one asked the way at night, and who made a friendly observation as to the difficulties of London's geography to strangers, was the first human being in London with whom one spoke at any length. There was almost an inclination to ask him to run one in—he was so good a soul. Thereafter was a 'bus-driver—and always since one has respected 'bus-drivers.

How one hated England and the English in those days! It rained; there was never any

sunlight. Everywhere were the hurrying people with the sad faces; always the roar of the immense traffic. In the parks the trees were dead, or seemed so. When one lay down to sleep at night, always came the curious reflection—a strangely discomforting one—"All about me in this single city are so many people packed together, on a piece of land about the size of a fairly large sheep-station, as we have in the whole of Australia, and I don't know one of them, and the only people who are interested at all in my existence are the hotel people, because they don't quite know whether I can pay my bill!" Truly it was a sad little period,—eminently tinctured with nostalgia,—and it took weeks and months to remove the impression of England which, no doubt through one's own foolishness, it planted in one's mind.

One mentions it merely to show how the average stranger must often in the first days of his sojourn in England be unconsciously "set" against the country and its people. Not many of us really care to admit the sources of our likes and dislikes, but one is more than sure that not a few fellow-countrymen with whom one has talked here about England have acquired their anti-English view from some experience similar to that outlined above. The country is strange, the people are strange, the

ways of life are inexplicable and mysterious. We cannot think in the same way as the English, nor can they understand our mental processes. And so, very often, incalculable harm is done to those Imperial relations which most Englishmen and most Australians desire to see strengthened and cultivated. Many of our people do not stay long enough in England to learn to love the country, as they inevitably must sooner or later; nor are they themselves seen in their best light by the English with whom they come in contact. The writer knows personally at least two Australian public men whose opinion carries weight in Australia, who, ardent Imperialists before coming to England, have returned not a little inclined towards the unsatisfactory, "We'd separate if it were safe" political frame of mind. And so, with all apologies for insisting upon a distinction between the terms "English" and "Australian," one endeavours to account a little for the fact, which is obvious to anyone who goes into the question seriously, that the distinction does not grow less.

When, as months go on, and one has seen the sun again, seen the brilliant awakening of spring in England,—nowhere can there be anything more peacefully beautiful,—learned a little to know its people and understand their

ways, and grasped something of the significance of custom and tradition, one cannot but confess to a certain falling in love with the country.

England grows upon you. The trim little fields and the hedge-girt roads and lanes which at first seemed so small and so cramping, have a fascination of their own. The slow, appointed orderliness which seems to rule the whole of life, makes itself clear as a part of the reason for England's greatness. That very greatness, you realise, does truly exist. You begin to understand why, in spite of much that is wrong, and many evils that would destroy a weaker people, the people of England, still dwelling in their little islands, rank among the greatest people of the world. Of course, if you are a decent Australian, you will never for a moment admit that England is so good a country as Australia, or that an Englishman is as good a man as an Australian,—any more than a loyal Englishman would allow the truth of the converse,—but you will conceive a great and abiding respect for the New Land and the New People. You will have got to know both better than in the first three days, when you took Waterloo Bridge for London Bridge, and experienced for yourself the abomination of desolation—being alone in London,—and will

have acquired an affection for the beautiful country, and the solid worth of the race, which you will never lose while you live—even if, in the strange whirligig of time, you were one day to take up arms against both. That, hopefully, will never come, and one merely uses it to illustrate the fact that even if England's foes could get to know her intimately she would have few.

In the beginning, and under the influence of the strange confusion which a first acquaintance with it breeds, one is apt to take London as England. There could be no greater mistake. As one labours to point out later on, London is a place apart from the rest of the British Empire. It is a province in itself. The Londoner is no more the typical Englishman than the typical Esquimau; and great and wonderful as the immense city is, you do not find the real England in it any more than you find the real Australia in Sydney or Melbourne, or the real New Zealand in Auckland. It is necessary to go out into the highways and byways, and to leave the Big Smoke behind, if you would see England as England is—and, incidentally, as it is at its best.

It is said that nowadays there is a decay in English rural life, that the cities are depopulating the towns, and turning the British Islands into more and more of a factory and a shop,

and less and less of a farm. Perhaps this is inevitable. One hates to think that it is so,—that by and by England may almost be expected to develop into one vast manufactory, one great emporium of the world's goods, peopled by a city-bred race, and lacking in all the fine characteristics that belong to an "open-air" country. One has little trust in any kind of economic predictions, be they based never so soundly on figures and facts; and it is at any rate pleasant to beguile oneself into believing what one hopes: that some solution of land and agricultural difficulties will be found to check the influx of population to the larger towns (which is to-day evident and obvious enough), and leave to England her real strength and power—a sound and healthy country life. But we are only concerned with to-day, and whatever to-day's tendencies may be—sufficient unto to-day is the good thereof. Another impertinent Australian may be expected to set England right by the time another half-century has passed. For the present one takes the real England as one finds it.

And how very good it is. It may be that unfamiliarity with the conditions of existence in an old country, and ignorance of the drawbacks which attend the tillage of ancient soils, prevents one from seeing very deeply below the

surface. But the surface is so pleasing, and so wholly delightful, that no desire to probe very deeply is possible in the mind of a new-comer. The very fact that there is so much green grass in England is sufficient to infatuate an Australian with it. Our sheep-to-the-acre standard of excellence in land capacity becomes a little, trivial thing. Ruthlessly it is borne in upon one that the measurement of estates in square miles is something to be deplored, that the subdivision of the best of Australia into scores of acres, instead of square miles, is the ideal. One comes to believe this with a pang of regret for the wider life of the new countries. Your Australian is as the Boer: he dislikes the sight of smoke from a neighbour's chimneys, and desires a skyline about him that is unbroken by the aspect of his fellow-creatures' habitations. But an acquaintance with England somehow causes him to think that his own country would be more prosperous and more happy if the standard were men to the acre instead of sheep. None of these considerations make rural England any the less strange and novel to him, in spite of its fascinations and delights. Its unaccustomed smallness is probably one of the strongest reasons why it should be so delightful.

How strange the tiny, irregular, hedge-girt fields seem at first! How curious it is to see

cattle grazing in little boxes of meadows that, literally, are not much larger than a big Australian stockyard. What is looked upon here as a wide expanse of open country, a large field, would not suffice for the homestead horse paddock on an average Australian sheep-station. That one should profess to such a sense of the smallness of England may seem to the English reader something of wilful exaggeration, a sort of desire to emphasise the immensity of our acreage at home, to the disparagement of his. But it is, indeed, true that one's first impression of the English country is as a chess-board pattern of little rectangular enclosures. "Small fencing" in Australia is becoming recognised as wisdom; but even it most often means enclosures of not less than 2000 acres. The writer has often been in paddocks, not considered unwieldy, which varied between 10,000 and 20,000 acres. He has passed through a certain sheep-run in Western New South Wales the area of which was at the time, and roughly, some 4,000,000 acres. (It may be said, as a species of "set-off" to such figures, that, on the estate last mentioned, it took more than ten acres of land to support one sheep.) And so it is not to be wondered at that we find England a little cramping on first acquaintance.

But if there is this sense, and if it is a little disagreeable at first, it is soon overcome by an inevitable appreciation of the great beauty of the country, and its wonderful richness. Was there ever a garden like Kent? It almost takes the breath away at first sight. Farms and orchards and hop vines are endless. As has been said of London, "What a city to loot!" one thinks of Kent as "What a country to raid!" It is London's kitchen garden. All through it one seems, without exaggeration, to be in a land flowing with milk and honey. And there are Sussex, and Devonshire, and Dorset, and Norfolk—but one might almost name county by county throughout England, and think of each of them as being in its own particular way the most beautiful spot on earth. One thing characterises them all—an endless sense of peace and plenty. It does not matter whether there really is such a thing as agricultural depression—they look as if its existence were impossible.

Wherever he goes in England the writer wishes that he could see it as it was in its wilder, original state—before the Romans came. What a wonderful new country it must have been! It is difficult now to picture it before any real civilisation began to change its face, but it must have been a paradise! What a

place to discover—well grassed, well wooded, well watered—an ideal "fattening" country! It is an unfortunate thing that an Australian's first ideas of any place are in relation to the problematical amount of stock it might support, but, having admitted so much, it might be said of England—for the benefit of other Australians who have not seen the country, and to whom such language will best express the author's ideas of it from their own point of view—that it would "fatten a hat-rack." For the enlightenment of the English reader it may be added that such an idiomatic expression of opinion is really to say as much for England as it is possible for an Australian to say.

CHAPTER III

THE ENGLISH

OUR people in Australia are unduly, and to their own detriment, given over to holiday-making, to horse-racing, to boastfulness of speech and thought, to political experiment, financial recklessness, improvidence, vaingloriousness,—and a host of other sins too numerous to catalogue.

Wherefore, having admitted in the beginning that we are erring beings to very much the same extent as the rest of humanity, it possibly may not be a reproach to the writer that he seeks to deliver a sort of minor judgment from a bench of national superiority upon a people who may be a better people than his own. He does not. He merely looks from the ground and amongst them, and only sees what he can see, and understands what he is permitted to understand. And whatever he has to say may only be taken for what it is worth, remembrance being had that he sees and understands

within the limitations of an "outsider" from far "outside."

Perhaps it may seem, as was said in the preceding chapter, a little invidious to insist upon the distinction between an Australian and an Englishman. It is the fine ideal of many people that all the white portion of the British Empire should be considered English. Using the word in its widest sense, of course we are English, having all branched from the same parent trunk; but there are, as a matter of fact, as wide differences between a Canadian, an Afrikander, a New Zealander, an Australian, and an Englishman, as between the last-named and a Welshman, an Irishman, or a Scotsman. They may be only differences of tongue and temperament, induced by climatic or geographical influences, but they are real enough, and the main effect of them is that the various tribes which constitute the Empire have, each and every one, their own peculiar manners of viewing the world and one another. In short, to an Australian in England, England and the English must seem as different as possible from the view which an Englishman takes of his own country and his own people from within his own borders.

There is a great importation into Australia—not so great as it should be, perhaps—of a

more or less useful commodity called New Chum. Any recently arrived Englishman, obviously unaccustomed to the ways of the land, is a new chum. If he stays long enough he, in turn, welcomes or derides new chums. The writer is a new chum in England. Now, almost one's first thought on finding oneself in England for the first time is: "By Jove! this is where they breed 'em!" On all sides are new chums, their fathers and their mothers, their brothers and sisters. Nearly everyone except oneself is a new chum; and presently it is realised that the position is reversed, and that you yourself are, at least so far as regards things English, one of the very rankest of new chums. For this realisation comes first of all humility, and then, later, a little of understanding.

At first, it is only frank to admit, you do not like the English. You see nothing in their manner but a cold, stupid reserve. You regard them as being automatic. Everywhere you think you discern the proverbial idea that one Englishman is as good as six foreigners—the foolish notion that you imagine will one day lead to England's undoing. They are slow to move; they will not move except in the ordered way taught them by their fathers, and then only with great caution and circumspection, and an

endless dread lest they offend against the canons of custom. They seem to be bound in chains of convention, and confined to alley-ways of tradition as narrow as their little country lanes. Then you observe the distinctions of class, as well marked and defined as different breeds of sheep or cattle. It pains you a little to have a working-man call you "Sir," because you may happen to be wearing better clothes than his, or, for the same apparent reason, to behold a country labourer touch his hat to you when you nod him "Good-day" in passing along the road. You miss the high-headed greeting of the Australian highways, where the shearer or the boundary-rider wags his head sideways at the man who employs him, as one who should say, "Good-day to you too. I'm as good a man as you. Likely enough I'll turn out a better in the long-run!" And you think you see some degradation to the recipient of the universal "tip." It astonishes you beyond measure when you find that some gold-laced railway official is not above securing you a seat for a few coppers. Often one has been half disappointed in not having coins thrown in one's face. Everywhere you seem to find little unusual things that do not cheer you overmuch. You read the many columns in the papers which chronicle the advent to town or the exodus

therefrom of people with titles, and wonder vaguely who on earth can be interested in such stuff.

Somehow at first—perhaps because you are as a fish out of water—you seem endlessly to keep on discovering small matters that jar, to be doomed to realise nothing but the minor faults of the English, to see for yourself nothing of the wonderful old independent spirit which curbed the power of Spain, restrained recalcitrant kings, and built up the splendid Empire of which you have always been so proud to think that you might call yourself a citizen. You begin to wonder how it is that this people have become what they are, and whether, indeed, they can last. You wander amongst the tombs in the Abbey and in St. Paul's, and are almost tempted to cry aloud, as the pessimist of old, "Ichabod, Ichabod, the glory has departed!"

And then, quite suddenly, you discover for yourself that leafless trees are not necessarily dead, that you have been altogether wrong and unjust, and that you are, to be perfectly plain with yourself, a very short-sighted and benighted being.

It is over twelve months since England awakened, one Monday morning, to learn with bitter anger of what undoubtedly was a most

wanton, senseless, and cruel outrage, by which some of her people had been brutally and inexcusably murdered by the war fleet of a friendly Power. (Poor Power! the gods have punished her enough lately! She must not be jumped upon when she is down, and there is no need to enlarge upon the incident here.) But it will be remembered how sullenly savage England became, and how, during the diplomatic negotiations which followed the incident, she sat quietly, and nursed her grief and anger through one fateful week—grim, determined, uncompromising. Much has happened since then, and the whole matter has practically been closed, but the recollection of that week will always remain with the writer of these pages as the ray of enlightenment concerning the real English character, which first opened his eyes to its abiding worth. He seeks the reader's pardon for quoting verbatim from a letter which he wrote home at the time. It described how, after the first outburst of angry astonishment, the nation patiently awaited the outcome of the negotiations :—

"The cable has told you nearly everything about the events of this strange five days. . . . You have read how all political parties have become united in face of the wrong which has been done to the nation and to humanity. . . .

You are just as well informed as we are. But, unless you are here in the midst of it, you can't realise just how extraordinarily striking and impressive this steadfast attitude of the British at home is. It is a phase of the national character which commands ungrudging respect, and which must compel the admiration even of those of us who find very much we don't like in that same British national character. If you have been fortunate enough to see it, you can quite easily forgive the arrogance, the conceit, the insularity of the Englishman who stays at home and misjudges the outside world. In a time like this, when immense issues are at stake, when to-morrow he may have to face the trials and troubles of a great war—and before he has got over the extra taxation of the last one—you will be able to find nothing in his bearing, his calm and resolute bearing, which is not altogether admirable. You will understand that you have seen him at his best, and that his best is a very fine and heroic sort of best. Afterwards, when he gets back into his narrow groove, and resumes his disagreeable hide of intolerance of ways that are not his own, it is to be expected that you will remember having seen something of his real nature, and will be ready to allow that he is a very strong man, and altogether a man. And,

as I have said, that is an aspect of the present situation which the cable cannot wholly convey to you any more than I can. It may be recorded, but to realise it adequately you must have been in England during such a fateful week as the present."

Since this was written the writer has found many more instances of the admirable worth of the English character. He feels sure that he will not offend English susceptibilities if he states, however, that a stranger must needs go and look for them. It is the lot of most people who travel at all by railway occasionally to encounter a disagreeable fellow who wishes to have the window closed when you desire that it should be open. You only see the worst of that man. From your momentary and biassed point of view, he is obviously an ill-conditioned, miserable, selfish creature. But get out at his station, follow him home, peep through his window,—and the chances are that you will see enough to convince you that he is a kind husband, a good father, and a very valuable citizen. In the same way, if you follow up the English national character—which is notoriously disagreeable to others than Australian new chums—you will find such things in it as will make you blush for the shortcomings of your own. At any rate, be you never so pre-

judiced, you will conceive a deep and permanent respect for it.

It is hard to define the typical Englishman. One might take a London policeman, a naval officer, a successful farmer, an honest city man, a manufacturer, the British workman, a bishop, an eminent Nonconformist divine, and a large land-owner, and roll them into a kind of composite being, who would have a few of the characteristics of each. The result might be typical. More than probably it would not be so. The truth is that the Englishman is such a varied being, and has so many sides to his collective personality, that one has doubts even as to whether the legendary John Bull fairly represents him. When you come to consider the number of elements which have been used in the making of the race, it is not difficult to understand this. To say that the English are more or less "mongrel" is to say the same thing of one's own people—possibly that the latter are so to a greater degree. It may be that the mixed strain in the breed accounts for an adaptability to circumstance that purer races do not possess. It is undoubtedly a powerful factor in the art of successful colonisation.

But however varied he is, however diverse and far-reaching his abilities and capacities, the typical Englishman seems to strive more

earnestly to model himself upon a pattern than after any other ideal. It is to be understood that one only refers to the Englishman who lives in England,—who has always stayed at home,—and it is not to be understood that this modelling of himself upon one accepted type is permitted to exercise any very deep influence upon the more important phases of his life. It is not to be believed that he really is desirous of reducing or elevating himself in the mass to one even level. But he likes to seem to do so. He has generally a horror of outraging any of the conventions and traditions of the class to which he belongs. If he is a university man, he wishes it to be understood that he invariably acts in accordance with the unwritten code of manners which he assimilated at Oxford or Cambridge. If he be a costermonger, he is loyal to the conventions of costerdom. The fetich of "good form" is worshipped as much in one class as in the other. He must, in outward things at least, conform to the rules which have been tacitly accepted as applying to that strange abstraction, his "station in life." See how speedily he attracts the attention of his fellows if he openly and wilfully steps out of the groove. He may be strong enough to get himself ultimately accepted as a legitimate traveller along a new path, but, in the

beginning, he incurs the surprised suspicion, almost the pained resentment, of all others who are decently and conventionally sliding along the well-worn track which he has deserted. His journey through life was marked out for him, in stages, in one of a series of lines, which, starting from a common necessary birth, are only more or less in hail of one another until they finally converge into a common necessary death. If he should hop across from one line to the next one, or the one beyond, he does something that is remarkable, and is sure to be remarked upon,—not, indeed, without some trace of astonishment. He has done an unusual thing, and in England it is not usual to be unusual.

Take a little proverbial instance from the minor things of life. It is only a jest, a gibe, a good-humoured satire invented by the English themselves—but amongst the minor things is where one looks for indications that best serve to show the trend of the greater, and "there is many a true word spoken in jest." The Londoner's summer holiday is a strict convention. For a month, or a fortnight, or a week, he is expected to absent himself from the daily round of his usual occupation, and to take Mrs. London, and the little Londons, to the country or the seaside. Sometimes, for one reason or

another, he may not be able to do so. Then, says malicious satire, he affects to have gone away. He draws down the blinds in the front of his house, and lives in its back rooms, so that at least he may seem to be "out of town" when all good people are expected, by all other good people, to be away. If he meets an acquaintance in the city, or wherever his industrial or commercial haunt may be, he indirectly leaves it to be inferred that he has "just run up for the day." Of course, no one takes this absurdity literally, but it seems to illustrate a peculiarity in the English temperament which is not at all easily grasped in the first instance by the stranger from a far country. And although it is an exaggeration —one assumes that it is—there is no doubt that it does well illustrate such a striving after a pattern of life as one cannot but fail to notice amongst the great majority of the English.

Now that is in England, where, of necessity, one must do as one's neighbour does, because there is not room to do otherwise. But look at the other side of the picture—the side that exhibits the Englishman as he really is, and not as he is desirous of seeming to be. Take the average young Englishman, of the educated sort, who goes abroad. It hardly matters where he may go to—to India, Canada, Africa,

Australia, or New Zealand. He sallies forth to make a new life for himself, to carve out a career that was impossible for him at home—where he might not decently leave the aforementioned groove. It is amazing how soon the real qualities, which you would not credit him with possessing in England, make themselves visible. He goes to a country where all is strange, new, often intensely disagreeable in the beginning, and where he is handicapped by the queer prejudice which all new countries have against "tender-feet," "red-necks," or "new chums." He finds that nearly all the ideas of life with which his home training have equipped him since babyhood are practically valueless. He has to learn how to live over again. And then come forth an originality, a resource, and an unconventionality which he himself has probably never before realised the possession of. Nine times out of ten—mind, one refers to the young Englishman who has gone out of his own volition, not the semi-compulsory exile—he succeeds. And he succeeds in competition with men who have been bred to the life which is wholly new and strange to him. How many of them one has seen in Australia, pink-and-white jackeroos,[1] who, fresh from school, full of home prejudices,

[1] Jackeroo=a learner of strange, new things.

useless idiosyncrasies, and sometimes an offensive conceit of themselves, have taken the new conditions as they found them, learned the new lessons, and outdistanced their contemporaries amongst the native-born,—have, so to speak, beaten the latter upon their own ground. It is not always so, but it is commonly enough so to exhibit the real value of the breed, and more often so than not. And it is sufficient to convince one that, in spite of his desire in his own country to be as like his own countrymen as if he had been moulded in the same mould, so far as externals go, the Englishman is in reality a very varied, diverse, and adaptable being.

That is so far as regards the male of the species. There is also the female of his kind. But how is a mere man, who does not hesitate to avow a belief in the theory that woman is everywhere an unsolvable riddle to man, to set about any consideration of the Englishwoman? He does so with a good deal of misgiving, and a great amount of deference.

In many ways she seems to be largely accountable for the "pattern" theory. She is the wife and the mother, who insists upon the observance of conventions which the man might possibly lapse into forgetfulness of. Woman everywhere is a stickler for tradition and for precedent, and no less so in England

than elsewhere. In England, one fancies that —despite the fact that the women of most of the States of the Commonwealth exercise a voting power—the influence of the "softer sex" upon contemporary life is infinitely greater and more far-reaching than in Australia. She wields a quiet and tactful, but none the less important power of persuasion, to an extent to which we are altogether unaccustomed. Indeed, it is said, with what amount of truth the writer confesses he does not know, that the civil, the military, and the naval services of England are a province in which she has no little influence. That is as may be—what most people coming to England from overseas cannot fail to recognise is, that the Englishwoman counts enormously in the life of England. Perhaps it is as it should be. There is hardly room here for a discussion of the matter—and, to speak the truth, the writer does not want to discuss it overmuch. He is not afraid, but he would rather not.

Whatever may be her status and her influence in England, however, one incontrovertible fact remains—she is usually very good to look upon. One does not refer wholly to her facial or her physical charms. What strikes a stranger above everything else, on first making her acquaintance, are her fine vitality and her

obvious healthiness. There is nothing "tired" about her. In our hot climate our women mature early and fade early. The Englishwoman is hardly grown up until she is out of her teens, and she remains a girl long after she is on the wrong side of thirty. This appearance of strength and activity, together with the comeliness and attractiveness always inseparable from real healthiness, is not confined to the leisured, or to the more educated classes, or even to the country-woman. How many pretty faces, and neat figures, and lithe, active carriages it is possible to behold in every walk of English life. What wonderfully delicate and pretty complexions one may see amongst the typewriters, the waitresses, the flower-girls—all the varied and varying constituents of the stream of femininity which flows morning and evening in and out of London. And the wholesome good looks of the Englishwoman are all the more to be remarked, because of the fact that as a rule she dresses very badly. That is not to say that she does not often spend a good deal of money over her costume. It is to say rather that she does not often wear it in a manner which does her full justice.

Now, for saying this last thing, the author claims that he is a very courageous person.

CHAPTER IV

THE HUB

ON the first night of London, it was this way. Having disposed of a small amount of luggage in a hotel bedroom, which, after six weeks of a ship's cabin, gave an impression of vastness similar to the interior of St. Paul's, and having dined, it was necessary to sally forth, in order to be certain that one was, after all, actually and really in London. And, presently, one became aware of Oxford Street, though what street it might be was not at the time known. It was not as fine a street as Collins Street in Melbourne, but just about as good as George Street in Sydney. It led to a circular intersection of cross roads, which afterwards became familiar as Oxford Circus, and thence one's steps wandered down through a curved and impressively uniform thoroughfare, in which the houses were as alike as a line of fence-posts, into another whirlpool of traffic, having in its midst a distinguishing

piece of statuary poised miraculously upon one toe.

Thence, about and along, to a square which blazed with electric light, and was surrounded with great music halls whose names and reputations had reached the other side of the world. One remembered the description of Leicester Square given to one in a harbour of the Solomons' on a hot night by a trader's mate, somewhat drunk, who had once been "something else" in London, as we sat on the deck of his owner's schooner, listening to the strains of a wheezy gramophone, and smoking constantly to keep away the mosquitoes which carry malaria. In the glare of the lights, and the hurrying of the thronging crowd, came back the murmur of the surf on the reef, the rank smell of the copra in the hold, the feathery outlines of the palms above the beach, and the moonlit, oily waters of the splendid bay. It was recalled by the marvellous accuracy of the homesick man's description, which made the place at once familiar when one saw it six months afterwards. Significant it was that the best of England of which he could speak eloquently was Leicester Square. This probably accounted for the fact that he was captain over ten kanakas that evening, instead of "something else." I knew, also, that here were those Leicester

Fields in which my Lord Mohun ran my Lord Castlewood through, young Harry Esmond being present. And so the place had a curious mixed interest, in which were blended the fate of poor Z——, Thackeray, and its own brilliant viciousness.

Out of there, on an erratic course, into a magnificent open space where towered into the darkness a tall column flanked by resting lions, and one knew that one stood in Trafalgar Square at the foot of England's splendid monument to the great little man who had saved her existence. There could never be any mistaking of Trafalgar Square.

By and by, after turning aside from another roaring artery of traffic, of which the corpuscles were cabs and omnibuses, one stood on a bridge. "Ah!" one said, "this is London Bridge, and here I am at last!" It was Waterloo really,—but ignorance is bliss. How beautiful the river looked, with the curved lights on the Embankment on the left, and the sombre masses of great warehouses looming up through the faintly illuminated haze hovering over the southern shore! One is always grateful for that first impression of the Thames, and always thinks of it as the river's finest aspect. In the daytime — well, perhaps one who has known Sydney harbour all his life cannot do

the Port of London justice, and so it is best to refrain from any expression of opinion.

But London at night! It is extraordinarily beautiful. A little misty wetness that turns the pavements into mirrors for the arc lights and the incandescents, accentuates its strange charm. As with the river, one always remains glad for having first seen the great city in the evening, for one never wholly recovers from a first impression. In the daytime it is huge and sombre, often very ugly, and altogether suggestive of an unwieldiness which, in fact, does not really exist. There is disappointment, too, at first. One has been used to new cities, well planned and well built, furnished with the modern contrivances easily and cheaply installed in such places, but which would be almost costly impossibilities in crowded London.

Perhaps some who read these papers will be disgusted with the writer for confessing to initial disappointment with the capital of the world, but he would try to remind all such that every impression is limited by the previous experiences of the beholder. Could they sail with him up Port Jackson towards Sydney on a brilliant summer day, or see the public buildings and the warehouses that make up the principal streets of Sydney and of Melbourne,

and the suburbs where each house has its garden, they might be inclined to make allowances for the existence of prejudices which have since almost wholly departed from his mind. But at first, in one's blindness, London is disappointing. It is only after an acquaintance of some time—when its wealth, its power, it enormous size have permeated the understanding—that one learns to like it and admire it. And then begin the discoveries of its many beauties and its absorbing interest.

First of all is its vastness, which, in the beginning, is utterly unrealisable. Sydney has somewhere about 600,000 inhabitants; Melbourne almost as many. From the top of the tower of the General Post Office in the first named, or from the roof of a sky-scraper hotel near the upper end of Collins Street in the latter, you may see, on a fine day, about as much of city and suburb as the eye can comfortably take in and the mind grasp. Coming down from the Bush, after twelve months' absence from the noise and crowdedness of cities, you wonder how there can be so many people in the world, why they are in such a hurry, and how they can bear to be so closely packed together. Both places seem to be as large and as populous as cities conveniently may be. Coming to London, you are only

aware of about a square mile of it during your earlier explorations. Of course you know that there is much more beyond, but what an enormous "much" is not at first understood. Almost the first thing that brought it home to the writer was journeying in a cab whose number exceeded 17,000. "Of a truth," one might have said, "this is a Great City!"

Then, on the first day that was illuminated by anæmic sunlight, and the sky comparatively cloudless, pilgrimage was made to the gallery round the dome of St. Paul's. As has been said, the prospect of Sydney from the Post Office tower is fairly extensive. Along both sides of the harbour, from the Heads to far up the Parramatta River, beyond Botany on the south side, and for many miles inland to the west, the city spreads widely, and covers a great deal of country. But here—heavens, London is limitless! To a murky, smoke-dimmed horizon there is a plain of housetops, a long prospect of continuous building. Save for the narrow, erratic burrows of streets, the open parks, the squares, and the river, it is almost one house. There is nothing to compare it with. It is tremendous! The very area of river flat and gentle downs on which it stands is as large as a large sheep-run. Because of the smoke, the outskirts of the

city are invisible. The whole world is full of houses. And most impressive, and suggestive of the number of the ants who burrow and swarm in the ant-hill, is the closely packed way in which it is built. Had it been constructed in the loose, open formation of Sydney or Melbourne, you might imagine that it would fill the south of England.

As you stand above Ludgate Hill, gazing westward, and filled with a great awe, again comes the strange thought: "In all the whole continent of Australia are not so many human beings as cluster about St. Paul's! Here in these little islands, which would be lost in Queensland, one city alone holds more human beings than the number making up the whole of the Commonwealth,—*which governs itself with no less than seven parliaments!*" It discomforts you to reflect what a little and new people your own is. But you are consoled by thinking that you like to be new, and would not change the Future for all the old world Past. You glory in your brazen modernness.

Such impressions are of the first fortnight. After its size has slowly dawned upon you, you begin to find how wealthy and wonderful London is. It is a shop and a bank, a gambling hell and a cathedral. Its streets are paved with gold, and set with thorns. It is

the place for a rich man, and *the* place for a poor man. It is all wealth and happiness, it is all poverty and distress. It is a huge paradox. Many things are possible in London that are also impossible. If it please you, and you possess the ability to do so, you may live, not merely a double life, but half a dozen different lives, which will never clash with one another. You may be, in London, at the same time, a priest and a pirate—figuratively, of course. It is big enough for both of you.

If the far future should ever see a great and real confederation of the English world, with its central Government located, say, in Montreal, Melbourne, Wellington, Sydney, Adelaide, Hobart, Johannesburg, or London, and the whole of it divided, for local government, into convenient States,—there should be a separate and distinct State of London. There is to-day, only we don't notice it. London is a province of the Empire in itself, and its people—its own typical people—a race as distinct, say, as the Australian and the Canadian. There is England, *and* there is London. London is not England. It is simply London—unique, unrivalled, autonomous. It exists in two aspects. In the one it is the capital of the world, the Hub of the Universe; in the other it is—London. One can put the second aspect in no

other way than that, nor is it possible to do so. There is the City and the Nation of London. Outside is England, which it dominates; further outside is the whole world, which it also dominates. Within its boundaries is its great self, dependent perhaps upon the world beyond for its food and drink, but in all other respects a law unto itself, and a race within itself.

It is something to be a Cockney—much as the Cockney's self-satisfaction is detested of others. He looks down upon those who are not of his people—witness the half-contemptuous designation of "provincial" for other Englishmen who dwell without the gates. But he has reason. You may not like it—but he has reason. When you have begun to learn something of the greatness and the power of his State, perhaps have learned more of it than he himself realises in detail, it is possible, though you would not change your State for his, to forgive him his conceit, his self-satisfaction, his lofty pity for those who are not his fellow-citizens. His arrogance, his intolerance, his tacit acceptance of himself as God's elect, are understandable. He has something to be conceited about, his arrogance is natural, his pity for "outsiders" is the healthy self-appreciation which has made it possible for him to make his

City and his State into what it is—the Hub of the Universe.

Many and diverse are the paths your feet will follow in the giant city. When you have become as familiar with its highways and by-ways as you may reasonably hope to become, you will still continually find new aspects of it. Sometimes it will seem to you the one place in all the world where it is worth your while to linger. Sometimes you will come to hate it with an intolerant and unforgiving hatred. But it is impossible for you to lose interest in it. Even when its discords strike you most,—when the rush and hurry of its strenuous, unending life shall have wearied you beyond endurance,—you will find in it those wonderful contrasts of past and present, of noise and quiet which are its most fascinating characteristics. And here are two of them.

There is a stretch of street in London—maybe three-quarters of a mile as you walk deviously—which is part of the brain, and wholly the eye and the ear of the British Empire. It is a busy thoroughfare, roaring and crashing the echoes of London's slow, interminable traffic to a leaden sky during the day; at night ablaze with the glare of electricity and gas, and, if the thin English rain be falling softly, as infinitely beautiful in its recollections

as it is infinitely slimy under foot. A man from Mars, coming to know it in its daytime and nighttime aspects, would name it, in accordance with its characteristics, "Strenuous Street."

For there is never any rest along this highway. All day long lines of crowded 'buses stretch in slow moving procession on left and right; hansoms and four-wheelers chase one another in endless succession; motor cars and costers' barrows mark the two extremes of social life; swarms of eager-faced men and women throng its pavements. There is no peace in it. And at night—the real night in London is not until after one o'clock—when all good streets, and "places," and roads, and squares are hushed in sleep, and decorously guarded in their slumbers by heavy-footed men in blue, it is still hustling and toiling and roaring with the unflagging energy that ever drives it, and never gives it rest. There is never any rest in Fleet Street, and very little upon Ludgate Hill.

But at either end stand monuments, abiding monuments to an older world, wherein you may find sanctuary from the rush and turmoil surging endlessly between them. St. Paul's seems to reach to heaven—a huge giant of a sentinel, seeing all ways at once across the mighty city stretching into obscurity on every

hand. At the other end, the beautiful Temple Church, hidden away beside the tall buildings that flank it on all sides, is a refuge even more peaceful than the great cathedral. They are two Gates of Peace which bound this busy bit of London.

Come eastward down the Strand, and pass by the two ugly churches of St. Mary-le-Strand and St. Clement Danes, keeping on the right-hand side as you enter Fleet Street. Not far from the "Griffin"—the unsightly monument which blocks the roadway where Temple Bar used to block it—is a narrow arched gateway of dull red brick, more than two hundred years old, and built by the same master hand that designed St. Paul's. When you have passed this dingy portal, you begin to realise that the din of Fleet Street is something left behind. When you have walked down the sloping flags that lead to the doorway, have passed through the beautiful Norman arch at the entrance of the church, and are standing within the round walls of the building which was commenced more than seven hundred years ago, it comes to you that here, indeed, the peace of centuries is concentrated. No roar from Fleet Street echoes into the splendid shrine. No sound of the outer world in which they lived and battled breaks the rest of the dead crusaders who lie

below the pavement, as they have lain so many hundreds of years. No harsh light streams down upon the recumbent effigies, armoured and crossed legged, which mark their resting-places. The dim twilight, against which the stained glass windows are brilliantly lit by the garish day without, seems symbolical of far-off years in which these dead men had their being.

It is the very atmosphere of antiquity. The transition from the busy world outside to the peacefulness within almost causes you to catch your breath. It has been so sudden, so quick —this coming from the present to the past. Think of it—less than fifty yards from where the halfpenny papers are vigorously crying to the hurrying twentieth-century multitude their latest wares, half a minute from a place where they exhibit linotypes for sale, and in the close neighbourhood of the clashing printing machines —you stand amongst the dead, back beyond Nelson's days, beyond the Great Fire, the Reformation, and the Wars of the Roses, in the far away twelfth century! When all your life before, you have reckoned historical things about you from 1788, the very creaking of your boot-leather seems a discordant, sacrilegious din.

And these nine monuments of the Templars who lie about you—eight of them fighting men

and one a cowled monk—how quietly they lie, gazing at the roof, with their legs crossed in the different ways that denote one or more armed visits to the Holy Land. If they could rise up after midnight, and see the *Daily Whoop* going to press! How far they are from us, and yet how closely they bring their day to ours! All that has happened since they first came here to rest—the new worlds and the newer worlds, the old Powers that lived and decayed and died, the young ones that have arisen and are strong, and the strange changes in their very place of rest. When, during the Protectorate, the Round Church became a sort of Law Exchange, where lawyers met their clients and discussed business with them, and the painted ceilings were obliterated with white-wash, it was a strange thing that zealous Puritanism and the hatred of all that appertained to the older faith, permitted the effigies to remain unscratched and unbroken. But through all the dilapidation and decay which beset the old church between the Cromwellian era and the third decade of the nineteenth century, when the work of restoration was undertaken, they were somehow preserved—to enable you and me to escape from Fleet Street and our own rushing, hurrying day, back into one seven hundred years removed. And so, thankful

that they are there still for us to see and rest among, we leave this gate of peace and seek the other upon Ludgate Hill.

Two hundred years have gone by since St. Paul's rose upon the ashes of the old St. Paul's—two hundred of England's mightiest years, whilst the Empire, in whose making the Templars we have just left had some little say, became what it is to-day. London has grown, and swelled, and spread in all directions. Thousands of new buildings have risen in it. Every feature, almost, has changed during this eventful period. And still to-day St. Paul's stands out above it all, its most conspicuous feature. From all about London it is the point that catches the eye, wandering over the immense wilderness of housetops, and seeking a resting-place. And in its own immediate neighbourhood, on the top of Ludgate Hill, it towers over all beside in a way wonderfully grand.

No description can convey the sense of vastness with which the huge building inspires a beholder. It seems to rise up out of a chaotic collection of hovels. And the "hovels" are, for the most part, three and four storey offices and shops of no mean size. St. Paul's dwarfs London. And within its vast interior, strangely contrasting with the roar of the citywards traffic, there is also peace and rest, and a kind of

splendid dignity of quietness. People crawl about beneath the dome like black ants. The span of the dome itself, above the Whispering Gallery, is so high and far away that all its outlines are softened and toned in a blue-grey mist, across which beams of light stretch slantingly from narrow windows hardly visible from the pavement. Footfalls resound on the floor, but you seem to lose the noise of them at once in the vastness of the interior. How restful it is! How many busy people from the striving world outside come in here to sit in the serene quiet, and go away refreshed, and with tired brains relieved and reinvigorated. There is not the same sense of being in a far-away age as in the Temple Church, but there is one which realises that the hurrying rush of streets is not the best of life. Beneath the mighty grandeur of St. Paul's dome it is possible to understand some little of the utility and the futility of the world beyond. In the clang and clash of the vortex of industry you are too near to hear clearly. Here, in the cathedral, you may pause, and dimly comprehend that what you have left on Ludgate Hill, and in all the busy streets, is really a divine melody, and not a discord.

Such as these are the contrasts of London. It is a city of compensations.

CHAPTER V

THE APPLE CART

ONE could hardly expect to deal with enormous London in two short chapters. There is so much of it, so many phases, such a variety of aspects, so vast a number of interests in its immensity, that no man in his lifetime could hope to adequately chronicle even his own impressions. Such as have been set down here are but a very few out of many —just one or two things seen and remembered, not because they were the most important things to see or to remember, but because they happened to strike one as one passed by. That is almost all a stranger may hope for in London, unless he is particularly bent upon the study of some definite aspect or interest. And even then he will find so much to distract and lure him aside, so many avenues that open up new vistas and outlooks, that he will be a very gifted and wonderful person if he manages to confine himself to his original intention.

There is so much. Life is short, and London is very big. It is only possible to make some kind of selection. It would be delightful to comprehensively study, for instance, London's traffic. Or it would be of endless interest to compare and classify different districts of the great province—to study its people and their ways of living in detail. But it is not to be done—not, at least, if one should hope to ever go anywhere else or do anything beside. Its University might do worse than institute a Chair of London. One does not know who could be selected as a professor. Sir Walter Besant might have done justice to the position. Is there anyone else to-day?

But we might take some particular aspect, and try to see what we can of it, even in so limited a space as one small volume affords. If you come to consider it, one of the most interesting features in connection with the huge beehive of a city is the method, or rather the many methods, by which it feeds itself from day to day. After a very little consideration, it resolves itself into a miracle. The immensity of the task is a fact that is not too easily realised. What six millions of people in one city means, the brain cannot thoroughly grasp.

It is only by side shows that one is made to understand the vastness of London. And

most illuminating of the side shows are its food markets. Everyone must eat, and if you see the great central depôts for food in the bulk and in the raw—such as Smithfield, Billingsgate, Leadenhall, and Covent Garden—the greatness of the food trade and the wonders of its organisation begin to dawn upon you, and, indirectly, you obtain some little inkling of the numerical strength of the consumer. Covent Garden is almost the best of them to take for our purpose.

London in the early morning is as different as possible from the London of noon. It seems another place—not merely because there is no traffic to speak of, but because the roar of strenuous life has not yet begun, and the air is clearer, and the people one meets fresher and more cheery looking than the anxious, hurrying folk who throng the streets later in the day. Come across St. James's Park at half-past five on a clear morning in summer, and you will think London the most beautiful of all cities in which you have ever been. The trees are in full leaf, and deliciously fresh and shady. Everywhere the smooth turf, rolled and mown into a state of absolute perfection, is a splendid carpet of green velvet. Across to the left, the royal standard waves over Buckingham Palace. To the right are the

huge piles of Government offices, that stand round about the Horse Guards; and in front is the long row of Carlton House Terrace, with the black column of the Duke of York's monument towering high above the houses into the faint blueness of the sky.

Go round the end of the terrace, and across Trafalgar Square into the Strand. Here you see the first indications that it is market-day at Covent Garden. Half a mile of waggons is banked up on either side of the roadway, from near Charing Cross to Wellington Street, up which the tightly packed ranks of vehicles continue to the neighbourhood of the markets. Those are the "buyers" newly come. In and about the market buildings are the waggons of the "sellers," piled high with all manner of garden and orchard produce. Tons and tons of turnips, hills of carrots, mountains of cabbages—a veritable infinity of greengrocery. It is a quaint scene—and almost as strenuous a one as you may see in England. But as a spectacle, the chief interest of it lies in the fact that neither the external nor internal aspect of the market has changed at all since the early part of the last century, when the oldest parts of the present buildings were erected. You see just the same kind of people, with just the same kind of waggons as old

prints of that date illustrate. Nor does it seem that methods of doing business have altered very much in the last seventy years. To the stranger they are slow and roundabout, but to the Londoner they have one great recommendation—they are according to custom, and reverable on account of age. Tradition is nearly everything in London.

When you leave the chaos of waggons and costers' carts, and go into the market itself, a curiously interesting collection of humanity surrounds you. It is a blend of Cockneydom and rural England. Rural England presides over its wares, and the Cockney is the middleman and the buyer. Everywhere is manifested the very keenest competition. One almost imagines on first sight that the countryman allows himself to be "taken down" by his cousin of the city. But it is not so. The balance is well maintained. Hodge has been coming to Covent Garden for too many years to allow himself to succumb to the wiles of 'Awkins. On his side he knows just about as much as his customer does on his. It is a meeting of Greek and Greek, and the tug-of-war does not usually result in a very decided victory for one or the other. But it is remarkable to a visitor that all dealings are conducted with the greatest good humour and affability.

There is never any bad blood. If 'Enery, of Edgware Road, supposes that Garge, of Kent, is seeking unduly to profit by his necessities, he merely advises him to "git 'is 'air cut." If Garge suspects 'Enery, he treats his overtures with a stolid indifference. Almost always both parties succeed in satisfying themselves, and effecting some sort of a deal which is mutually pleasing. And so it is all through the market—buyer and seller meeting on even terms, and getting just about as much out of one another as each is able.

In the flower market—one of the most beautiful sights of London—it is as amongst the strawberries, the cabbages, the carrots, and the turnips. Tradition, custom, the way of the trade of centuries obtains to-day as it did a hundred years ago. It is merely a modern edition of the eighteenth-century Covent Garden, a little more orderly, a little better policed, but essentially the same. To the stall-holders one would not suggest for a moment that methods might be improved upon. It is the way of England,—and maybe the power of England,—this abiding steadfastness in the business of trading.

From the spectacular point of view, even though it has nothing whatever to do with London's food supply, the flower market at

Covent Garden has more interest than any other section. It is a brilliant colour effect, not only in flowers but in humanity. The people you see there are as various as the blossoms they sell. A great shed is divided up by parallel rows of flower stands, which in the early part of the morning—that is to say, from about five o'clock—are a perfect blaze of gorgeous colour. Cubic yards of roses, enormous stacks of poppies, piles of lilies, carnations, forget-me-nots, sweet-pea, and hundreds of other species of the beautiful contents of English flower gardens, which are not familiar to Australian eyes, make up a scene as fascinating as it is unique. Everywhere there is colour, cast into bolder relief by the sombre clothing of the crowd. In dingy London such tints are almost unnatural. It is a great flower show, but different from most flower shows in that you may see it free of charge on any morning of the week but Sunday. From the first coming of the buyers until, at half-past eight, the ringing of a bell declares the market closed, the selling proceeds without pause. City florists, costermongers, flower girls, hospital nurses, nuns, Americans, and nondescripts drift about the stands, and pass up and down the narrow lanes that are marked out by bunches of flowers. Sometimes belated revellers who have made

night into day drop in on their way home. Occasionally you see tourists conscientiously consulting *Bædeker*,—and always there is the strange blend of Cockneyism and countryside.

In the open are carts containing the coarser kinds of vegetables—cabbages, peas, potatoes, carrots—packed as closely together as possible, and piled up with produce. They have come in the very small hours of the early morning,—somewhere about two a.m.,—and have stood awaiting the business of the market to begin, which it does between four o'clock and five. They come from any distance away from London up to forty miles. Sometimes they are put into trucks, and horsed in London at the railway stations, but as a general thing they still come in by the road. Only on Monday is the market free of them, for although business at Covent Garden is mainly conducted in the early morning, a certain amount goes on all day, and by the time the square has been cleared up to-morrow's contingent of carts commences to arrive. In amongst the carts salesmen preside at little desks, and all the vegetables are sold in lots at wholesale prices. They are retailed at stalls within the sheds.

At midsummer the show of fruit is a very fine one. Strawberries in particular are wonderfully abundant. And such monsters!

Two bites at a cherry may be out of place, but two bites at a strawberry are almost necessary in England. A dealer informed one that they were absolutely a drug in the market during this particular week, the prices realised for them hardly making their sale worth the trouble it entailed. Currants, gooseberries, and raspberries are also displayed in limitless profusion.

But if the cheapness of strawberries and such like English outdoor fruit is astonishing, the dearness of many other varieties is equally so. Pineapples, melons, grapes, peaches, and nectarines are only for the longest purses. The kind of pineapple which you buy at the rate of three for a shilling in Sydney, you could not obtain in London for less than, at the lowest, five shillings. Melons, one thinks, must be obtained for ornament alone. But that is only the point of view of the unwealthy. The most expensive fruits find buyers in London, and, if you are prepared to pay for the luxury of it, you may have any fruit you please, in or out of season. What is more, you you may purchase it at Covent Garden.

Billingsgate, Smithfield,—all the other mouths of the giant,—we must pass by. It is with a sort of despair of ever being able to make clear the vastness of the Hub of the Universe that one

has tried to sketch here, ever so briefly and inadequately, the aspect of but one of them. To a small extent, however, an early morning in Covent Garden serves to make realisable the vastness of London's appetite and the capacity of its digestion.

CHAPTER VI

THE ANTIDOTES

THERE are days in England for the outlander — more especially in the first months of his experience of it—when, at the bottom of his heart, he "has no use" for the country or the people in any degree at all. They are ugly periods, in which the demon of an uncompromising discontent takes possession of his innermost being, and converts it into an ill-conditioned, pessimistic, implacable nucleus of dissatisfaction. All that he sees is ungainly and unsightly, all that he hears is unreal and wrong, all that he feels is his own sense of strangeness. He has no sympathy with anything English, no appreciation of anything having to do with England. He hates the land and the people with a fervour that is almost a mania. And he longs for his own country with such an unreasonable and inconsolable home-sickness that, failing any other means of getting back to it, he would almost

be prepared to stow himself away in the hold of the first outward-bound steamer he might find at Tilbury. On such days he is prepared not to admire anything English, and to contrast unfavourably every condition of the life about him with every condition of the life at home. If the weather be wet and cold, England ought to know our sunshine; if it be bright and warm it has only a feeble brightness and warmth not worthy of the name; if it snows or freezes there never was a beastlier climate. The people become sulky bears, the streets are tortuous and dirty alley-ways, the houses archaic and hideous hovels, the newspapers dull and prejudiced rags. There is only one aspect of England that he feels he could properly appreciate—a view of its receding chalk cliffs, as seen from the decks of a ship bound down Channel. Truly, they are hard times those. He has upon his shoulders what children, wise in their symbolic expression, describe as a black monkey. Everything is wrong.

But if he be in London during any of these sad interludes, there is at least one asylum where he may hope to cure his soul of its passing sickness; whose spirit and influence will turn his discontent into satisfaction with all he sees and hears and feels; where he may

shake the black beast from his back, and realise that it is himself he has to thank for all that he was blaming England for. It is not a hydro, or a place where the vagaries of the liver are regulated by artificial means. There is nothing new or lately discovered about it. It has been where it is for some time. It is, as a matter of fact, one of the oldest resorts in London. Kings and queens have made use of it for these many hundreds of years past. Great statesmen, soldiers, sailors, thinkers, poets, priests have done so too. Most often it has been the last resort, where they have found peace without ending, and rest that nothing interrupts. So, if you, being new to England, grow impatient and tired of the country and the people, go there also. Westminster Abbey will cure you.

The feeling that, above all others, moves an outlander going into the Abbey for the first time, must inevitably be that of reverence for the country that bred the men and women sleeping all about him. Even if, in black mood or otherwise, he thinks or cares little for the England of to-day, he cannot but be impressed by the past of which the tombs and inscriptions on floor and walls, in chapels and in cloisters, are the mile-stones. Be he never so deliberate a scoffer at old and traditional

things, glory he never so vainly in the sense of newness which is his, he cannot but stand here in awe and veneration. Even if he likes to think that a hundred years ago his own race began anew, that in the story of the older one from which it has sprung it behoves him to take no very deep absorbing interest, he cannot but be moved to wonder at, and love for, this ancient shrine, where the carved names alone spell out a great and abiding story. If it only has the interest of a visitors' book, in which great souls, resting for a space in their travels through the Unknown, have inscribed their names, it must be something to him. He cannot leave it as he went in. It must have taught him something. No one could wander through that dim lit, ancient church, without experiencing a sense of some inward gain; some betterment of self.

It is very beautiful and grand. Even the grotesqueness of the tombs which match them so meanly cannot detract from the splendours of those lofty aisles, or from the dimly seen glories of that high flung roof. When the sun is shining outside, and sending shafts of light across the impalpable blue haziness of the Abbey's atmosphere, and the soft colours of the windows mellow the deep gloom of it all, it is more than grand and beautiful,—it is a wonder-

land of quiet harmonies and softened tones,—such a wonderland as may never be forgotten.

But turning from its beauties, and from its own great story and associations; forgetting that it has seen the crowning of so many kings, and the burial of them afterwards,—the one remaining thought is for the mighty dead who lie close together everywhere. What a resting-place they have! How they sanctify it! Eight hundred years of England's greatest dead—the very best of the men who have called her Mother, for nearly a thousand years! It is true that occasionally some of the worst have found a burial-place here too, but they hardly count; nor do the nonentities whom for the most part an indiscriminating eighteenth century found lodgment for where they should never have come to lie. Whatever class of men in English history—men of action, men of thought, men of letters—from which you may have taken your boyhood's heroes for worship, you will find here. It is a strange, eerie feeling that comes over you, standing in the dim Abbey, when you reflect that only a few feet away lie all that is earthly of long-dead kings and queens, whose dates of accession once gave you trouble and annoyance, before ever you thought of being anywhere close to their bones. Somewhere under foot is good Geoffrey

Chaucer, and not far away Charles Dickens, and—but in all its corners are great familiar names, too many to record. If, after London has gone to sleep, and the great doors of the Abbey have long been closed, the dead men and women could get up and mingle together, and walk about—what a wonderful company it would be! What a strange, diverse, incompatible assembly! It would be a weird experience to spend a night alone here amongst the dead—a lonely vigil with imagination. But if you had done it, and in the silence and solemnity of the splendid fane, counted up the deeds that had given cause for the existence here of most of the tombs, you would have been quite cured of any feeling of disrespect for England. There is no place that can better teach you what England has been, and is, than Westminster Abbey. There is one old tome, however, wherein you may read something of the influences that have been at work in her making.

Wherever one goes, and whatsoever landscape or seascape one sees, there always remains in the mind (at least that is how it seems to the writer) some colour impression of any particular place or scene. Details may be clear and sharply cut, or they may be dull, but always the background has a certain char-

acteristic tone of its own—some combination of two or three simple colours lithographed on the brain—that are always of the mental picture recollection frames. Thus, London is drab; the Mediterranean is wholly blue; the Red Sea littoral is a combination of grey, yellow, and red—the look of its barren shores; South Africa is yellow plains and purple kopjes; the Solomon Islands are green mountains, opal waters, and white beaches; Australian plains in drought time are grey and blue—the colours of earth and sky. As one recalls each picture, the objects in the foreground, and the middle distance, and the background define themselves more or less realistically—but always the predominating tones make the scene familiar. Each one is, so to speak, catalogued and classified by its essential colours. Consider a familiar stretch of water — the Thames between Greenwich and Westminster. If you close your eyes and think of it, isn't dull yellow the first recollection of it that comes across your mind?

Think of Oxford, if you have been there, even for ever so short a time. Does not the old city shape itself out of a greyness and a greenness that are its background of charm —the grey of its ancient walls, and the green of its beautiful trees and gardens, and walks

and fields? Afterwards come the winding streets, the window gardens in the quads, the towers and spires, the halls and the chapels, the young fresh faces, the placid waterways. But always and for ever they stand out from amidst a lovely setting of grey and of green. And always the grey seems to symbolise great age, and the wisdom of the centuries, and the green the eternal freshness and beauty of the spring-time of life, and the promise of years to come.

"The world, surely, has not another place like Oxford; it is a despair to see such a place and ever to leave it, for it would take a lifetime, and more than one, to comprehend and enjoy it satisfactorily,"[1] wrote a man whom all who have ever known the place must write down a wise man, even if he had no other claim to be one. It is, indeed, "a despair" to see Oxford, and to fail to realise its meaning, as almost inevitably must those who run to it hastily for a day and come away again. Ten hours might do for a dockyard, an arsenal, or a manufacturing centre, but ten years would hardly teach a new-comer that which is to be learned from the stones of Oxford. In a day he is only just able to realise how little he realises of it. It is borne in upon him, with startling force, that he

[1] Nathaniel Hawthorne.

possesses no "yesterday," that he has nothing behind him with which to compare what is to come before, that he has dropped suddenly into a world where he must wander in ignorance. The books that he may have read do not matter, the ideas he may have formed do not count,—it is not quite like anything he has seen, or read of, or imagined in all his life before. It may be to people in older lands. They may have seen and known other old world paradises—if there be any other quite like this. But to us who find an old Georgian, verandahless house a quaint survival of bygone days; who ride past the grey posts of broken-down stockyards, idly wondering what kind of prehistoric people branded cattle in them; who have marked Captain Cook's landing-place at Botany Bay as a monument to the dawn of our civilisation,—Oxford is a little unreal. We know, however, that it is ourselves who have eyes and see not. They are not in focus, somehow. They cannot serve us as we are accustomed to expect of them. It is our own fault,—and not altogether our fault.

For, remember this. We are new. Everything to us lies in the future. We honour and respect the memory of our pioneers,—the brave men and women who faced harder troubles than battle in the "blazing" of the tracks

which opened up our lands for us, who lived lives of hardship and solitude such as no Englishman who has not been out of England can understand—and at home their fine deeds make our history. In 1813—ages and ages ago, time moves so swiftly in new countries—Wentworth and Lawson won a way for us across the Blue Mountains, and led the march to our rich western lands. That is one of our "dates," and to us in Australia it is as far back in the past as the signing of Magna Charta is here. The *Victory* still floats at Portsmouth, and Nelson's clothing may be seen in Whitehall, but 1805 to us is almost at the beginning of the world. Thirty years ago, in Australia, is a very long time back; in England it is the day before yesterday. What we take to be ancient and historic would here be almost garishly new. And so, in Australian eyes, Oxford is unreadable. One may only look and admire, and come away a little pleased at having at most been touched by a sense of its age, and beauty, and grandeur. For the rest, we must take it on trust. It would be almost an impertinence to pretend to any adequate realisation. But, having been there, it is at any rate possible to properly appreciate the pride of the Oxford man in the mere fact that he is an Oxford man. Nay, further, it is even

possible to understand the bumptiousness of the Oxford prig—almost, indeed, to sympathise with it. He has something to be a prig about.

It may even be confessed that one goes to see Oxford in just the suspicion of a hostile spirit. Many times, in many parts of the world, one has met with the Oxford man who seemed to be inordinately proud of the fact that he was such; a few times, to one's sorrow, one has come in contact with the wholly-to-be-regretted being alluded to above as the Oxford prig. And, as has been said, until one has oneself gained some inkling of the justification which both man and beast have for their pride and their priggishness, both are a little resented.

There is a story of a certain eminent and genial sheep-breeder in New South Wales who was so earnestly convinced of the superlative excellence of his stud flock, and the eminent superiority of his hundred thousand acres to any other hundred thousand acres of land anywhere that, on all possible and impossible occasions, he sounded their praises to such as would hearken. Travelling once on an interstate steamer he met a mild tourist, who for three weary days was perforce compelled to listen to the praises of the, say, Boastful Downs

Run and the Boastful Downs sheep, until he one day quietly remarked, "But tell me, Mr. Golden-Fleece, is Boastful Downs in New South Wales, or is New South Wales in Boastful Downs?" One has almost been tempted at times to wonder whether Oxford was in England, or England in Oxford.

Perhaps we are always too ready to scoff at what we hear praised too freely,—it is the characteristic irreverence which we have been assured Australians possess to a degree. The Universities of Sydney or Melbourne, we might remind ourselves, have higher "pass" standards for a degree than Oxford. One can get to know just as much at either of them as in the ancient, out-of-date knowledge-shop up the Thames Valley. We might comfort ourselves with the reflection that Oxford is not "the only pebble on the beach." But go and see it, ye scoffers, and assuredly it will seem plain and clear that that is just about what Oxford is—"the *only* pebble on the beach." At any rate, once having been there, there remains no resentment, no spirit of hostility, no rebellious determination not to take for granted another of the institutions which the English seem to regard as being above criticism. There remains nothing but admiration, wonder, affection, and a little envy. All latent hostility

has ebbed away. All desire to adopt the *nil admirari* standpoint has gone. Oxford will have brought about your surrender to the charm of the old and the beautiful, if nothing else in England has ever done so.

It is so old, so quiet, so beautiful. The grey walls of college and hall, chapel and cloister, take you back into a splendid past. The wonderful lawns, the clinging vines that carry the green over the grey, the long shady walks through verdant arcades, the gentle waterways, the patches of golden sunlight filtering through the trees on to the grass and gravel and worn stone pavement, are of to-day, and of yesterday, and of many yesterdays. Quick voices, eager steps, laughter across the quadrangles, fresh, healthy faces are the preparing for to-morrow which seems indefinably to blend with the Present and the Past. Somehow, in some way you can only vaguely realise, Past and Present and Future are united here. The bygone years lurk about the grey stones. In the arch of a window, in the vaulting of a passage, behind a massive door, black with age, venerable ghosts of days that have been, seem to look out on a world that is their own world, and yet a new one. Time has walked slowly through the colleges — has even, one would think, not hesitated to sit down and rest, when

it has pleased him so to do. He could no hurry here. All Eternity might be waiting,—but there is that in the air, in the aspect, in the spirit of the place, which must delay him. And so occasionally the Past has caught up with the Present, and both hold the hands of the Future.

How it all contrasts with every other place that one has seen! Glaring little white-walled drops in the Karoo; weatherboard and crackling galvanised iron in the Back-blocks; wind-lashed townships in Otago; rustling plantations in the Pacific—every remembrance of places, and men in the places, that one has recur. All the colleges in the great University of the World—from foc'sle to shearer's hut, from Port Said to Port Melbourne — where the Faculty of Experience is paramount, are in competition with these old foundations, and so much as one has seen of them rises up for comparison. But there is nothing like it all, nothing to compare it with. Oxford stands alone!

Put aside all books, leave all learning to take care of itself, take no heed of honour lists—look at Oxford from without. Never mind its influence on English life, its influence on English politics, its bearing on world destinies,—take it as it stands. Just see it! Carry no

introductions, be led by no guide, hear nothing of story and tradition. Content yourself with what your eye alone may convey to your brain. Stand and look! And then, if you have breathed in ever so little of the beautiful spirit of the place, have become aware of an inward sense of reverence which may, in the slightest degree, have influenced you towards feeling healthier and better and cleaner of soul, — then you have seen Oxford. You may not understand the deeper meanings that Time has written on the grey walls—perhaps you are too new a product for that—and you may not altogether realise what life means within them. But this you cannot fail to comprehend —that Oxford itself is almost the noblest place you shall have seen in England.

Take this idea out to the Back of Beyond. You will never lose it. "The world, surely, has not another place like Oxford."

CHAPTER VII

THE KING

TO give a reason for this chapter, it is necessary to explain that in Australia we know no kings—excepting, indeed, those few and aged monarchs whose rank and title are of courtesy alone. King Billy of the Paroo, King Paddy of the Bogan, or King Micky of the Murrumbidgee—to take some Australian royal cognomens—are the disappearing representatives of dynasties that go into prehistoric obscurity. But their race is run, their rule has ceased; a few years, and they too will be numbered, with the marsupial lion and the giant kangaroo, in the list of things forgotten. The glory of Australian kingship has departed. The vastness of the royal hunting-grounds has been exchanged for the precincts of mean and sordid back-block taverns. Civilisation to these poor kings has been synonymous with drunkenness, demoralisation, disease, and death. Once upon a

primitive time he has been the best man of his race—the fleetest of foot, the strongest, the most skilful with boomerang and spear. No white chief ever strode with a more regal dignity, or held his head higher, or looked upon his courtiers with a more fearless eye, or ruled them as a more absolute autocrat. But now—shaky, nerve-shattered, pot-bellied, and spindle-legged, clad in cast-off garments of the terrible civilisation which he has not assimilated, but which has exterminated him, his royal domains alienated by the invader, a crude dipsomaniac—he is dependent for his very existence upon the infrequent "tchillin'" which he cadges, the "tucker" and the "bacca" of his conqueror, and such missionary zeal and effort as is left over from attendance upon more interesting and, on the whole, more promising material. Australia's race of kings has come to an end—an end that is sad, because it has been inevitable. For he was bound to go, and of the typical Australian monarch it may be said, in his own pathetic pigeon English—"That pfella close up 'longa finish.'" Our own personal acquaintance with kings is sad, and sordid, and unimpressive.

Our ideas as to our real King are more or less vague and mythical. This does not mean that most of us do not respect and regard the

Constitution under which we are governed, nor that we are lacking in deference or esteem for the occupant of the throne of England, who is, indeed, as much our chief man as he is of the English people themselves. It means that he is not amongst us; we do not know him; he is a sort of legend, a subject of illustration and fable in the English newspapers. Far away on the other side of the world, where he is never likely to come, he is little more than a distant power, able to exercise a veto with respect to the conclusions which our own elected law-givers arrive at. We know that the Great Seal of England is necessary to certain transactions of State. Equally, we recognise that the head of the Empire's system of Government—or, indeed, of any Government—must necessarily personify itself in some one human being. And so, where we have no first-hand knowledge of other kings than those of the Old Australia, we mainly regard the King of England as some sort of a department of Government. There is no hint of Australian disloyalty in this. It may be credited to us that we have not been unwilling to make sacrifices for the welfare of the Empire upon occasion. It may be further credited that we are at all times willing to stand up and take off our hats when bands play, or crowds sing, the

quaint doggerel which serves the Empire as a National Anthem.

But there is not in Australia the same *personal* feeling as obtains towards royalty in England. We do not know royalty. It has not come in any striking way into our experience. We know the Governor-General—he entertains and presides. It is true that he represents the throne, but he is successful or not according to his merits, *i.e.* the amount of tact and resource with which he has been endowed by nature, and the qualifications of his secretary and aides-de-camp. Similarly do we know the State Governors. But there is, let us say, the Minister for Lands. Now he is really a deity whom we may offend or placate. He does things that immediately affect us. He is real, and visible, and a power in the State. He is a force, an entity, a presence. We know him and his works, good or evil. If his portfolio were abolished, and the lands left to look after themselves, it would affect us very much. If the people of England altered their system of Government, abolished the monarchy, elected a president, and did away with the peerage, it would hardly make any difference to the Outer Empire. There would still be Downing Street. But consider what a difference it would make in England and Europe. Think how many people would

take the change to heart,—how many would oppose it with the last drop of their blood, how the serious English temper would ruffle itself into violence over the matter. Here lies the difference. With us the King is a figurehead, a department. Here he is a very real, living presence, and still a great influence in the land, despite the limitations which the slow centuries have placed upon his power. In England the reigning monarch is Personal. To us he is more or less Impersonal.

You cannot grow very enthusiastic about an abstraction. It is not possible to sustain any great human interest in a man who lives more than ten thousand miles away, whom you have never seen, and are never at all likely to see. The only way in which the majority of people in Australia look upon the King of England is, one is confident, as they look upon, for instance, No. 10 Downing Street; that is, as has been said, in the light of an office—a department. Of course, in the cable services which supply us with news of London and the world, the "personal regard" of England is reflected to us, because those who attend to the transmission of news are in touch with it here, and are consciously or unconsciously influenced by it. But given two contingencies—the sudden illness of the reigning monarch, and the simultaneous

sudden illness of our most dependable fast bowler just before a test match at Lord's—one is absolutely certain as to which of the two would have most effect in selling the daily papers in the streets of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, or Brisbane. The display bills exhibited in the streets might print the King's danger above the other, but the talk of the man at the street corner, the man on the tram, and the man in the club, would be of the chances of the team in the test match, rather than of demise of the Crown. This may sound very dreadful in English ears; but, if you come to think of it, it is nothing other than natural. A change of rulers would make no difference whatever to us, less indeed than a change of Government—and that makes none at all to speak of. We would feel vaguely sorry that a good man had died, but our display of such sorrow would be little more than a formality. It is impossible to feel personally about an impersonality.

It is therefore an amazing thing to the outlander in England—the attitude of the English towards the head of the State. To some little extent he strikes one at first as having been deified. Of course this is a wrong impression, and one afterwards comes to understand that, apart from appreciation of his qualities as a

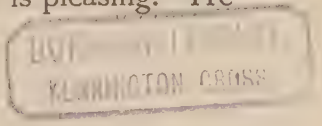
man, what it really all means is that he is regarded as symbolising the State in his own person. In the King the Englishman sees England; sees all his hard-won institutions of freedom, and the responsible custodian of them. In his loyalty to the King he is loyal to himself. It is a perfectly logical and healthy attitude—almost an instinct that is bred in the race. But it is hard at first to grasp—hard to remember how England has schooled its Kings through a thousand years; in the main has been well served by them, and collectively has reason to be grateful to them. The man without the tradition of kings sees in one of them only another man like himself, wonders vaguely why some people have all the luck, and half fancies that he could as well play the part—just as he could, if necessary, "act *Hamlet*, manage a farm, or edit a newspaper." But the man with the traditions sees in a king the keystone of an arch which supports his whole social fabric. And he blends the man and the king and the keystone into a being who is to him almost a little superhuman. A few times in the history of his people it has been borne in upon him by the very human failings and quite manlike weaknesses of certain of his monarchs that they were not necessarily exempt from ungodlike propensities to do him wrong, or to take ad-

vantage of his confidence in their infallibility. And then with surprise, almost with apologies, he has driven them away, or lopped off their heads, or hired a "first murderer" to relieve him of their burdensome presence. But he has always returned to the old tacit belief eventually, and has never quite got it out of his head that the King is, if a man like himself, at any rate endowed with some attribute appertaining to the miraculous.

With King Edward—who is a popular man before he is a popular King—it is difficult to deal in generalities. It is difficult to see where the English regard for him as the first separates itself from its regard for him as the second. As a matter of fact one rather believes that no distinction is realised. The English take him as a whole. They seem to sum him up as "a good man for the job," and hardly to view him in any other light than that of a King. One writes, of course, of the point of view of that fine fellow the "Man in the Street." The King is always to him "Edward Rex, D.G., F.D.," etc. In the uniform of a field-marshal he is as Wellington was, in his naval costume he is a Nelson. He can be anything he chooses — because he is King. And yet, underlying all the childish glorification of the office itself, one always realises that there is a

fine element of liking for an amiable gentleman, who never "puts his foot in it," who is a good "sport," and who "plays the game" with tact and discernment where not only one, but several, of his contemporaries contrive to blunder clumsily. They like him as a man, but they are nevertheless almost prepared to endow him with supernatural virtues. One imagines this from the manner in which the daily papers record with gravity such facts as that the King walked about before breakfast at Marienbad—just as if it were really a startling thing, expensively discovered for the benefit of the public, that after all he should walk like other men. It was almost to be expected that he would take his daily exercise in mid-air. The seriousness with which the trivial personal movements of the royal family are chronicled—and newspapers do not print news which does not interest a majority of their readers—seems more than anything else to indicate the way in which the institution of royalty is regarded in England. It is quite a solemn matter,—and, ye irreverent outlanders, if you snigger at it you will at the very least incur the suspicion of being anarchists, atheists, and louts.

To the outsider—if he may venture to say so—the look of King Edward is pleasing. He



is older, perhaps, than the humourless illustrated weeklies have pictured him for us ; he is possibly a little stouter and shorter ; his beard is rather white than iron-grey. If one were to come across him as a passenger, say, on a P. and O. steamer, one would remark to oneself—"That man is a 'somebody'—and a good sort, too. He looks like a business man of some kind. Whatever it is, it is a big business. He has dealt a little in Responsibilities, but he doesn't find life a bore. He is a man who is well liked, and who likes being well liked. He is a very human-looking man." You would feel that you would like to know him. There is something genial and attractive in his face, something that would make him popular if he were mayor of a third-rate Australian municipality, instead of head of the greatest Empire that has ever been in the world. He looks as if he possessed qualities sufficient to have made him as great a success in any business in life as he is in the King business. One says "business" advisedly. It is easier to imagine King Edward as the head of a great business undertaking, requiring tact and a knowledge of men for its carrying on, than as an active general or an admiral. There is that indefinable air about him which most successful business men seem to carry.

But before one's own impressions concerning kingship, which are necessarily—as has been explained in the beginning—altogether of a matter unfamiliar and rather unreal, comes again a sense of the deep English regard for the person of the present occupant of an office which the English almost worship. If—to suppose once more the unlikely abolition of monarchical government—it were necessary to choose a president for the new British Republic, and the present King were to be nominated as an independent candidate without party pledges, it is to be well believed that he would easily head the poll. Of whom amongst his contemporary sovereigns might this even be supposed? He may not be so strenuous a ruler as the uncrowned king across the Atlantic, but even that human concentration of the energies possesses to no greater extent the confidence of his people than would Edward VII. if he were President instead of King. It is, indeed, with Theodore Roosevelt and Emil Loubet that one finds better reason for comparing him than with, for instance, William II. or the Tsar Nicholas. As is the case with the two first named, he has the confidence of his people—and it is such a confidence as can only arise from affection and respect.

Not very long ago, in a certain London

journal, an article was published, over a *nom de plume*, which discussed with great seriousness, and in an entire spirit of appreciation, King Edward VII. in the capacity of English Foreign Minister-in-Chief. Briefly, its argument was that, as the King had proved himself so tactful and astute a diplomat, and so capable a man of affairs, since his accession to the throne, the whole business of government might be left in his hands. The writer contrasted the people of England's contempt for Parliament with their trust in the King as an administrator, and was bold enough to assert that the nation as a whole would be vastly pleased if he were to act more and more on his own responsibility, and less and less with the approval of the two Houses. He was not even timorous about stating that we were at present witnessing a momentous kind of revolution, by which Parliament was gradually but surely being relegated to the lumber-room of things effete and useless, whilst the prerogative of the Crown was taking its place in all matters of importance. And in his own mind the writer was adequately convinced, no less of the truth of his contention, than that its ultimate realisation was a thing most eminently to be desired. And that it would have the approval of England he had no doubt whatever.

That may be so. It may be true that Parliament is, at times, like the law, an ass. It may be also true that King Edward, if he had the conduct of Government wholly to himself, could carry it on in a very much more effective and complete manner than his faithful Lords and Commons. But then so could you or I. The only pity is that other people do not hold the same view. You and I would never allow supplies of cordite to run dangerously low in our arsenals. We would not introduce yellow labour into a country already piebald. We would not perpetrate Education Acts that did not please everybody. We would never do anything that was wrong, never attempt to do anything that was not wholly sound and right. Neither, of course, would the King. And our trouble is his—everybody does not look at the matter in the same way.

Now the King's greatest and most conspicuous virtue is his uncommon sense. Naturally, one supposes that his ideas of kingship do not exactly coincide with those expressed above as the ideas prevalent in Australia. If they did, he could hardly have made for himself the genuine diplomatic reputation which he enjoys. But he is too wise and too honest ever to be carried away by the ideas which the writer of the article referred to in the foregoing para-

graphs has enunciated. One could well imagine him administering to those who put forth such opinions a rebuke similar to the one tendered by King Canute to his courtiers. His strength lies in the fact that—as in England is accorded as a virtue to the lesser lights among his subjects—"he knows his place." He has no false notions, as had a predecessor who died in Whitehall, about divine right. (At any rate, if he has them, his actions give no evidence that he is at all swayed by them.) And he never oversteps the mark in any way. He never gives the most critical of his critics the opportunity of saying, "Well, he had no business to do that." He sees just how far his power as a world-influence extends, and he makes use of it to its fullest extent, but he never in any way abuses it. As for the merest possibility of his accepting the proposition that he should usurp the functions of parliamentary government, it is almost too absurd for consideration. One has only referred to it here in order to make the comparison with Canute when some of his people were obliging enough to intimate as their belief that the very tide would stop rising if the king ordered it to do so. King Edward is just as wise as King Canute in the matter of rising tides, whether they be salt water or the will of the people who love him.

It is a fine thing to consider, and one as to which the English may well pride themselves, that King Edward's life is so secure as it is. The writer freely confesses that it has more than once surprised him to find that, from the kerbstone even, it would have been no difficult matter to make an attempt upon it—and that with many reasonable chances of successfully accomplishing such a gratuitous crime. So fearlessly unprotected does he go about amongst his people, that it would almost appear as though he actually courted destruction at the hands of a fanatic or a madman. But it is not so. His personal guardians are the people who stand along the kerbstones; his security does not lie in the brace of troopers who precede his carriage on ordinary occasions. It lies in the affection of his people.

The writer remembers seeing his carriage for the first time, from the top of an omnibus, as it drove away from Charing Cross one windy evening. The two mounted policemen were the most noticeable feature of the equipage, and their smart appearance prompted interrogation of the 'bus-driver as to who might be inside the closed carriage.

"What-ho!" was the reply. "Don't cher know? That's 'is most gryshus!"

"What! the King?"

"Yuss ; that's 'im, right enough."

One expressed surprise at the fact that his escort was so small, so apparently inadequate. It was no more than the escort of a State Governor at home. How were they to look after the King, in case of a row? The driver laughed.

"W'y, 'oo's goin' to 'urt 'im, mister? There ain't no one in London 'ud touch a 'air of 'is 'ead. 'E's a good bloke, 'e is."

Now that was one way of putting it. It may not be usual, in old king-equipped countries, to refer to the head of the State as a "bloke." Even to an irreverent Australian it sounds a little incongruous. But it is, one believes, perfectly true. And its truth is a matter for congratulation no less to King Edward than to the nation.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COMMONS

IT was during the first vague week of one's discovery of London that, one day, having penetrated afar into the wilderness, one realised that one was "bushed."

On all sides were long avenues of tall houses, with little iron railings guarding a sort of moat in front of each, and each equipped with an ugly porch of exactly similar design to that of its neighbour. Every street was like every other street, and they cut across one another at any angle but a right angle, and changed their names on the slightest pretext, and there were absolutely no landmarks, except a square. The square was in reality a shoal, upon which one was frequently wrecked, being led back to it time after time by the mysterious streets. There were no shops—nothing but those grim residences with ugly porticos and moatlike areas, and it was very desolate. Since then one has located that wilderness of similarity in

a dozen different parts of London, and always been quite sure that the last was the scene of one's wanderings on that dull afternoon. At first one took it to be a colony of Socialists, who had built according to their beliefs. And at last one became afraid, and fled, taking cab. And the only direction that came into one's head at the moment was "Houses of Parliament," for they had not yet been identified. So, in due time, and whence one does not know, one arrived at the riverside, and bowled along the Embankment, and presently made the acquaintance of Big Ben, whom there is no mistaking.

Now, if you have come many thousands of miles, not especially to see a given object, but with the pleasing certainty that you will before long behold it, you will be fortunate if the actual sight is as inspiring as the anticipation. It does not often happen to be so, and when it is the fact, makes an impression. So one never forgets the first beholding of the Palace of Westminster.

It was a grey afternoon—not wet, but one of those characteristic atmospheres which so well match the soot-grimed stones of London, and seem to suggest that none other is possible therein. You would swear, on those days, that bright sunshine and clear skies were never

known along the Thames flats. A thin, blue, almost impalpable mist, of the kind that softens the outlines of distant ranges in sunlit countries, hovers over all, and tones down every sharp angle, and every clear-cut outline, and every striking object in the background. Tall gable ends, and high towers, and pointed spires afar off, are suggested rather than defined; whilst close at hand the soft haziness hangs like a curtain of gauze between yourself and everything you look at. It is an eminently suitable atmosphere for London. Its very obscurity accentuates what beauties the great city has. On such days you come to think that London and its atmosphere might have been designed by Whistler.

The Embankment terminates in a little slope that rises up to the approaches of Westminster Bridge, and it is not until you have walked across the beginning of the bridge, and can see the stretch of yellow water above it, that the full splendours of the stately building are revealed to you. There is no better view of it than this. The long flatness of the House of Commons Terrace stretches far up the river, and the high walls of the immense pile overshadowing it narrow in a fine perspective, as they recede into the soft blueness of the clinging haze. Line after line of noble architecture

sweeps away towards the silvery grey background. Window after window grows smaller and narrower as the eye travels along the high perpendicular outlines that lie within the greater ones. Thousands of carvings and cornices become lost in the dimness of the veil before the upright line of the far-off corner ends the vision. Everywhere is decoration, as florid and diverse as the leaves of a forest. Everywhere carving of complicated and intricate sort. Everywhere, and over all, the rich endowment of a splendid stateliness. High overhead the great clock tower dominates Westminster. Beneath you the swift, yellow tide laps against the buttresses of the bridge. All about is the hurrying roar of London. And in your mind some dim sensation of gazing on a carved and jewelled casket that has been made to hold the very writing of that unwritten constitution which is your own people's pride as much as of these you stand in the midst of. It was by the upper waters of the turgid stream gurgling underneath that Englishmen first made certain requirements of an old-time king which brought the English freedom of to-day. And here on the lower reaches of the same old river stands this splendid monument to the greatness of their efforts, and the triumph of their success. There is no true citizen of the British Empire

who could gaze upon the outward aspect of Westminster Palace with other feeling than one of veneration and of pride of race. It is not hallowed by the centuries, like the Abbey behind,—but it is more than hallowed by its association with, its embodiment of, the living principles that are its cause of being. For enclosed in this four acres of great building is the guiding spirit of the British races—the Will of the People. Every far-off legislature of the Free Nations—at home in Australia, in Africa, in America, in New Zealand—is its offspring. Every boast of freedom that we utter in our new countries, and that is uttered in the older one, has been made possible by what has been done about this spot. Truly, one *must* pay homage to the Mother of the Parliaments—in its external aspect at any rate. Whether its present-day internal economy is anything to become enthusiastic over or not, hardly matters. A first view of its outward semblance is something to remember always.

Thus, it will be seen, your humble outlander goes respectfully and decorously, and with a mind open to appreciate all he may see or hear, when he makes pilgrimage to the House of Commons upon an evening of the session. In spite of whatever characteristic tendency he may be conscious of possessing towards taking

nothing for granted in England, whatever amount of doubt and scepticism his national failings may incline him to, he is prepared to find himself as much in sympathy with the inside of the House as with its external aspects. He has no deliberate intention of not being greatly impressed, nor does he of malice aforethought propose to find the House of Commons disappointing. It is with a delightful feeling of *Now*-I'm-going-to-see-something that he presents his ticket of admission in the lobby. And by the time he has learned the virtue of patience in that magnificent entrance hall, and finally attained to the point of vantage in the gallery to which his passport procures him tardy access, he is full of anticipation of being as wholly inspired with admiration and awe as on the afternoon when he first gazed at the Houses of Parliament from Westminster Bridge. Not for one moment does he admit any possibility of his experiencing some minor disappointment. Not for an instant does he expect that the House of Commons will not realise for him all those expectations which he has been treasuring. He goes into it with a pleased certainty that now, at any rate, he will have something "to write home about," as the expressive American puts it. All the wisdom of England he looks to find here. All the power

of the whole Empire he hopes to have concentrated within his range of vision. He is to peer into the brain of the British nations. His expectations as to the ideals he is to realise are very high.

He may have become fairly familiar with the aspect of more than one minor parliament, may know something of the make-shifts and make-believes of political life in several self-governing communities. The stratagems and counter-stratagems of party government may be within his knowledge. He is tolerably well aware of the fact that no political convention is immaculate or wholly irreproachable. But he has always looked forward to finding in the House of Commons a higher standard of ability, uprightness, statesmanship, dignity, and administrative capacity than in any other legislatures he may have been acquainted with. As far as it is possible to realise it, he has expected to realise there the perfection of government by the people and for the people. He has come wholly with the intention of admiring, altogether with a determination to appreciate. And it may be stated quite frankly that his chief realisation after a few hours is one of disappointment.

Perhaps he has looked for too much. Possibly he has expected to find an impossible collection

of demigods exercising its collective wisdom over the affairs of Empire. The mere fact that the Commons is but a collection of flesh and blood and bone and cerebral tissue may have been overlooked. He has hitched the waggon of his imagination to a star, when he should have attached it to a dray. The outside aspect of Westminster Palace has been too much for him. But the fact remains. And the fact is this—that the House of Commons differs in no respect, except those of numbers and of power, from other Halls of Legislature with which he has been aforetime acquainted. To a visitor from another world, who might have had opportunity of seeing both, its personal aspect would not be more impressive than that of the House of Representatives in Melbourne. It might even in some respects turn out to be a little less so.

The writer is perfectly well aware that such an expression of opinion as that ventured on above may bring down upon him the wrath or the ridicule of the English reader, but he is in no way inclined to withdraw it. It is a high tribute to the results of the evolution of parliamentary life in England that its forms should have been so minutely copied elsewhere as to give to anyone who visits the Houses of Parliament for the first time an impression of

having seen them before. To almost every detail, procedure in the Commons is something familiar and well known. All its manners have been carefully copied by its offspring. Even the quaint ceremonial of most of it has been jealously preserved. The "bauble" itself lies on the tables of the Newer Commons. So that in his first glance round the chamber the outlander finds himself surprised that he is not surprised. He sees men much resembling the men he associates with the benches of his own country's legislatures, and inevitably compares them with the men he is familiar with. And it is almost inevitable that he will find the member of the House of Commons little different from the member of the House of Representatives for or against whom he may have recorded his individual vote. He comes to the conclusion that the Member of Parliament is very much the same being on one side of the world as on the other, in an old country as in a new one.

But there are two or three great and striking differences. In the House of Commons, though the general type is one that is familiar, there are several classes of member which do not flourish in Australia. The most notable of these is the very young member—scarcely more than a boy—who has taken up politics because it is the "thing to do" according to

family tradition, and for whom a place has been found here as easily as one might have been found in any of the great public services. That he should be gifted with any precocious brilliancy, or show any great promise of ability, does not matter. He is here because he chooses to be, because it was still possible in England that the votes of a constituency might be more or less at the disposal of those who decreed that he should go into Parliament. One does not hint for a moment that the existence of this type of member argues anything against the honesty of politics in England. It merely is eloquent as to the fact that family and other influences still count enormously. This type of member is impossible in the New Parliaments. No youth may choose a career in them with any certainty that electors will be willing to assist him in its realisation. He must have either proved himself to be, or succeeded in getting his constituents to take him to be, a man qualified for their representation. The choice does not lie with him.

Now there are many young, and some middle-aged, and some old members of the House of Commons who are obviously only such because the electors who have returned them do not require ability or capacity of a very striking character in their representatives. The pos-

session of a name which has carried real weight in some previous generation, of large manufacturing or business interests in the constituency, or relationship with some powerful personage in the Government, are frequently the best reasons why not a few honourable members hold their seats. It is impossible to believe that it can be otherwise, when some of the gentlemen of this class are seen in the House. No one can believe that a youth fresh from a university career, in which he may not even have troubled to take a degree, can unquestionably be the fittest representative which it would be possible to procure for some thousands of voters, or, indeed, that he is even tolerably fit to represent them. Nor is it easy to understand why other gentlemen, of more mature years, but with "nonentity" labelled large on visage and cranium, should have come to exercise a voice in the ruling of the Empire. Nor why some old and obvious "have beens" should do so either. It is only by remembering that it is here, because it likes to be here, and is in a position to indulge its liking, that one can account for the existence of this class. It might almost be comprehensively defined as the "manifestly unfit" species of the genus M.P. And any stranger, outlander or otherwise, who visits the House of Commons during

a debate can have little difficulty in identifying types of it. It is a class which the parliamentary life of the new nations has hitherto not very extensively evolved.

But, on the other hand, the House of Commons is splendidly free from that blot upon the Australian political system, that excrescence on our parliamentary life—the professional politician. It may be a prey to all the worst features of party government, a mere arena of battle for the ins and the outs, or even a happy rest camp for the unfit, but it has not yet become the daily-bread mill of the statesman who "lives upon the game." You may possibly be able to find in the number of its members a fairly large proportion of those who have axes to grind. That is inevitable anywhere, and in any representative assembly. But you will not find the man who wholly makes his living by being a member of Parliament.

It may have been gathered from these pages that their author is in no way disposed to hide the light of his native land under a bushel, or to admit that there is any other country in the world as well worth claiming citizenship of, or that he would care better to belong to. As a matter of principle he is ever prepared to give the lie direct to any who abuse his own country

—almost, indeed, to speak the lie direct in backing it up. He has narrow-minded prejudices that favour Australia before any other part of the world, and is not at all ashamed to say so, and no sympathy whatever with those lofty souls whose cry is "any country before my own" in international or racial questions. And so it is with a heavy heart, and some amount of reluctance, that he confesses to the feelings of envy which the absence of the professional in British politics inspires him with. England has long suffered the taint of professionalism to corrupt her sport. She has to be congratulated that it has not yet corrupted her domestic politics. For the worst results of the system of payment of members which both our Federal and State Legislatures have to endure, are not to be found in her parliamentary life. And it is sincerely to be hoped that they never will be found in it. When they are, the Mother of Parliaments will have attained to a dishonoured old age, and will find that all her troubles are ahead of instead of behind her.

Payment of members is, in theory, an excellent method of providing against class domination in politics. Its chief claim to virtue is that it enables the man who otherwise could not afford to do so to take an active part in the direction of his country's affairs. And to a

certain extent it justifies its existence. But a train of evil consequences follows its employment as a political system that more than counteracts its undoubted advantages. Among the most evil of these is the adoption of a career in Parliament by sundry enterprising persons as a way by which they may secure to themselves a very comfortable means of existence. Not alone is a fixed salary to be depended upon by a member, but there are in addition not a few facilities for adding to it by "pickings." The serving upon Select Committees is one of the best of them. The professional member of Parliament's whole policy is centred in his efforts to retain a comfortable billet, and to make it as profitable as it may be made. To record a vote that may assist in bringing about a dissolution is, therefore, a thing to be avoided by him at all costs. His ideal Parliament is one that continues in existence for the full term of years which it constitutionally may. And he is consistently persistent in doing his very best to ensure this desirable end. A Government can only do one great wrong in his estimation, which is to appeal to the country in the event of its defeat. And in the Australian Constitution there is, in his eyes, one most serious and grave default —the arrangement of triennial instead of sep-

tennial parliaments. However much he might disagree with the Balfour Government in the United Kingdom, it would at least have one great merit in his eyes, if he were a salaried member of the House of Commons—the noble way in which it strove to keep a Parliament alive. It is easy for any English reader to understand that England is spared a great deal by not having adopted payment of members. And it is no exaggeration to say that most Australians agree in assigning to its vogue in the Commonwealth most that is evil in political affairs there.

It is not, of course, that the real professional member of an Australian parliament is in the majority, or even in a considerable minority. The numerical strength of his class is small, but the mere existence of the class at all is an unmixed evil. And that its absence from the House of Commons should not fail to strike an Australian as one of the best attributes of the Imperial Parliament is not to be wondered at. Even the parliamentary fledgling, or the parliamentary booby, is to be infinitely preferred to the parliamentary sharper. Even the existence of what are still practically pocket boroughs in England is to be preferred to the train of harmful consequences that would follow on the introduction of payment of members in this country

—consequences as to which we are painfully alive in Australia to-day.

So, on the one hand, an Australian outlander may be struck in the Commons by the existence of one class of member which is unfamiliar, and, on the other, by the absence of one which is too familiar to him at home. For the rest, he finds the English Parliament uncommonly similar to those of his own country. He has expected to be much more impressed by it than he has been, and he comes away with perhaps a comfortable sense of having discovered that his own legislatures are not poorer in individual ability and capacity than the great ancestress of them all. He has looked for much more than he has found, and even if he has to confess to some little disappointment, it has not been an altogether unpleasant disappointment.

But he has seen a great thing. It is not so much whether individual members are much better or much worse than those whose virtues and failings he is more familiar with in his own "bauble shops." It hardly matters that in his own way he has been moved to say to himself, "My word, these fellows are not such miracles after all!" And it doesn't count for anything that he finds some of them well below the average standard of fitness for the positions they occupy, any more than that the worst

element of his own legislatures is conspicuously absent. What does matter to him is that he has seen what is, after all, the abiding model of all parliaments, the convention that has set the fashion for all parliaments, and which must always stand as the Parliament of parliaments. When he goes out into the night again, past the old historic hall of William Rufus, where the great Oliver stands guard with sword and Bible, and looks back at the huge pile of Westminster Palace looming up against the London-lit, cloudy sky, he cannot but feel that he has been in the very temple where is kept alight the altar flame of the freedom of all the British people, in England and oversea. And he cannot but realise that, after all, he has seen something whereof the seeing was a privilege.

CHAPTER IX

THE RICHES

THERE is only one aspect of England more startling to the unfamiliar Australian than its wealth,—and that is its poverty. They both present extremes of which we know nothing in our own country. Both assume proportions such as we can hardly realise when we behold evidence of either. Both are equally striking. And for the fact that neither the one nor the other are things which we are accustomed to contemplate in Australia does one remain thankful and content. For with the first extreme the second seems to be inexorably involved. If the huge fortunes of an immensely wealthy class, and the luxuries and civilisation which their possession commands, are lacking in our new communities, there is also lacking the awful and debasing poverty that contrasts so strongly with the richness of England. If we have no class that may go through life absolutely idle, should it choose to

do so, we have none that must, of its very destiny, be content with a precarious hanging on to existence, and no more, during the days of its earthly pilgrimage. If some of us cannot own seven motor cars, most of us can at least afford a wheelbarrow for the transport of the burdens we have to bear. What there is is more evenly distributed than it is here. What there isn't is only realisable when one comes here. And so, first of all, one turns to the wealth which is not ours—the amazing, dazzling wealth of London and of England.

Now this is the deep impressiveness of it. Where we put up a paling fence, the English erect a stone wall—a real stone wall, mind, not a thing of bricks and plaster. And along the top of it, instead of a single barbed wire, they stretch a line of costly spear-heads radiating outwards. Where we drive a row of piles along a water frontage, and make a timber wharf which is quite good enough for anything, they plant down huge blocks of granite brought from hundreds of miles away. Where we sling a spidery steel bridge across a river in a few months, they spend years, and a mint of money in building a massive series of arches that look as though they would last until the river dried up. Where their railways cross gullies, they put in enough masonry to make

a house, instead of contenting themselves with a row of sleepers and two steel girders. (They have enough money to afford to consider the scenery, even in little obscure gullies.) When we build a railway up to a city we usually stop on the cheap land at its outskirts, but they buy up a roadway through densely packed house property, at enormous cost, and have their terminus in the middle of the city. Where, in a club or a hotel, we content ourselves with tiles, paint, and wall-paper, they must have marbles and alabaster. Where we would have enclosed a piece of land with a six-wire fence, thinking ourselves uncommonly smart if we squared off the roughness of the posts and painted them white—which we seldom do,—they put up a stone wall. In short, where we use steel, galvanised iron, wire, and paint, they use granite and marble and wrought metals. These are the matters that first open one's eyes to the fact that England has a good banking account. It is not so much the ostentatiousness and show that impresses one, as the solidity and abidingness of everything.

And yet in some matters where we equip ourselves with the latest and the best, the English are astonishingly content with the obsolete and the inconvenient. London, for instance, has made the Marble Arch—which

is really rather an absurdity — at a cost of scores of thousands of pounds, whilst it is equipped with the most ridiculous and inefficient of telephone services. Whilst its streets are extravagantly illuminated at night, a very large proportion of its citizens goes to bed by candlelight. Nevertheless, the evidence of their collective wealth is everywhere made manifest. On all sides one is reminded of it, and if in some things they cling to the out-of-date and once-upon-a-time, it is rather because of the huge respect they have for the gear of their fathers than because they cannot afford to possess themselves of the Entirely New. It is because they instinctively distrust the Entirely New.

If the massive granite where one looks for piles, the solid arches where there might not unreasonably be steel lattice-work, and the stone walls where we would have wire, are suggestive of a national long purse, the aspect of many of the English themselves is not less so. It is not so much personal appearance that serves as an indication of wealth, as personal lack of occupation. Nowhere is it possible to find a greater number of people more intent upon doing nothing than in London, just as it is not possible to find so many elsewhere feverishly intent upon doing everything. In

the mornings elegant youths saunter along Piccadilly, or give execrable exhibitions of horsemanship in Rotten Row. Their clothing is immaculate, their horseflesh superb,—they themselves ineffably bored and tired looking. In the afternoons Regent Street and Bond Street and Hyde Park are the resort of the affluent unemployed. It is more than instructive to go and watch them in any of these places seriously intent upon the filling in of time. It is amusing. The deadly earnestness, the absorbing intentness, the determined aloofness with which men and women who need not work to live, drive and ride and walk, indicate that there is a seriousness about belonging to the wealthy class of England. In public, at any rate, there is nothing flippant about it. But it is amazing to find how many do belong to it. During the summer months, when London is said to be "empty," although there still remain in it an unconsidered remnant of a few million people, the West, literally, has such a depopulated appearance as to give one a very excellent idea of the numerical strength of those whom the orators of Hyde Park allude to, in an uncomplimentary sense, as "the idle rich." It is enormous! Not so enormous, of course, as the number of the busy poor, but still very great and considerable. The size of

it is one of those things which impresses a stranger with the affluence of England—or, at least, of some of England. But if the positive pole of England's wealth gives him something of an electric shock, he is not less shocked by the negative. That, however, is another story, and deserves another chapter.

Go to Hyde Park some afternoon during the season. For the sake of its picturesqueness alone it is worth many visits; but for the sake of the enlightenment which it affords you as to the wealth you are in the midst of, it would be worth camping in for a week.

The Park in spring is very beautiful. One is not quite sure that it is not one of the most beautiful expanses of open country in England. It may be that its location in the dense heart of London lends it a charm of contrast. The dingy miles of bricks and mortar, in which it is set as a rich emerald, may possibly accentuate its appearance of an oasis-like freshness. The hum and roar of London on all sides may give it a scenic value which would not be so remarkable were it out in the open country. No doubt it does gain enormously in beauty because of the ugliness surrounding it. But whatever gives it its abiding charm, there always remains the recollection of it as the one place in England where England's extra-

vagant wealth may be most fittingly displayed. Stand on the bridge that spans the Serpentine on a bright day in early spring, and gaze either way. The soft outlines of the fresh green foliage along both shores, the velvety lawns sloping gently up into the long colonnades of dark tree-trunks, the silvery rippled surface of each wide reach of water, reflecting the thin, pale blue of the sky, make a picture of quiet loveliness that it is not easy to match anywhere. Or linger inside the gateway at Hyde Park Corner, under Apsley House, and look up the carriage drive and along the Row. The wide avenue of billowy leaves is inexpressibly fine. It is a splendid setting for the splendours of equipage and dress which fill it with life and animation and colour in the afternoons. It is just *the* setting required to do them justice. It is a kind of elaborately furnished showroom.

And what a show it is! Every way one turns, the abundant evidence of wealth, the aspect of pleasure and idleness, the hum of life and animation are about one. Whether the Englishwoman contrives to look becomingly dressed or not does not matter,—here the moving scene takes its brighter colours from her raiment, and the diversity of her raiment is as striking as its costliness.

But it is in the horses that you will take most delight. In them you will find a standard by which you may most readily measure the intrinsic value of such a display as the English make in the Park on these sunny afternoons. You know the cost of horseflesh at home in Australia, you recognise the value of a well-matched pair of carriage horses when you see one? Well, think of the very best pair of bays, or chestnuts, or browns, or greys you have ever known, and consider their value. When you have done that, multiply it by three or four, and the result will roughly approximate the average price of such pairs as you may admire and covet in Hyde Park any afternoon during the season. And think of hundreds of pairs drawing hundreds of carriages round in long, slow procession. The amount of money that is invested in high-stepping, bearing-rein tortured, mutilated-tailed horseflesh must add up to a large amount. And there are the carriages themselves, and their upkeep, and the silly-looking fellows with stiffly folded arms upon the boxes, and all the people who can afford the time to come and look at them, as they make their daily conventional pilgrimage round the drive. It is an expensive-looking crowd, and if you come here on Sundays at the time of church parade,

when it is mostly on foot for the better display of its mere personal opulence, you see it at closer quarters,—and it doesn't look any cheaper then. But even the most cursory walk through Hyde Park during the season will be enough to convince you that there is much money in England. You will not find it necessary to stop and reckon up the value of the horses. He who runs may read.

Of all the streets you have ever read of, Bond Street is the most disappointing. (But it is also the most surprising when you go to buy things in it.) "Stepping into her carriage in Bond Street," say the society novelists, "the Duchess gave an order in a low voice to her coachman." When you come to see the actual Duchess in that narrow alley-way, it seems somehow as though her grandeur had lost itself in a slum. It is a narrow, tortuous, congested lane, which, for some queer reason, has got itself established as the most expensive thoroughfare in the world. It is mean looking, but it is priceless. The very unimpressive shops which line its scanty side-walks are each leased at a figure representing a higher rate of income than many important personages in the professions, or in commercial life, enjoy. And their contents are priced at figures in conformity with their rents.

It is not, one believes, that you can obtain anything of a much better quality in Bond Street than in other parts of London. It is simply the power of the tradition, encountered everywhere in England, that makes its wares expensive. It would almost seem as if those who occupy the street had long ago said amongst themselves, "Here we are—right in the middle of the people who have got the money. We'll make them pay, — because they've got it,—we'll make them pay exceedingly. Why shouldn't we, if we can?" And they have done so, and it is another of the indications of the great wealth which is of London and of England that they should continue to succeed in doing so.

No other reason than a similar one to the Bond Street "the-money's-here-and-we'll-get-it" can account for the prices of admission to London theatres. Great actors and actresses are not in better form in London than they are in such towns as Liverpool or Manchester, the theatres are really no more comfortable or commodious than the provincial playhouses; the pieces themselves, save in a few exceptional cases, are not staged with any greater sumptuousness of dress or scenery. But the charges for admission are nearly double those which obtain in the provinces. Why it should cost

more to see precisely the same performance, under precisely the same conditions of accommodation, in London than it costs in Liverpool is only owing to the fact that there are constantly more people in the former prepared to pay the higher rate than in the latter. It is merely what is colloquially known as a "try-on." But it is a successful "try-on" in London, because the money to spare is there, —because the wealth is there to greater excess than elsewhere.

It is the same in all things. Wherever you turn, whatever instance you may care to take, you will find that London and England are so endowed with an extremity of wealth on the one hand, that constant evidence of its existence confronts you. In the mere matter of this little book you are reading now, Mr. Englishman, no doubt you are already lamenting the fact that you have been beguiled into, nominally, paying away six good shillings for so much rubbish, whereas your luckier cousin in India and Australia has got off for about half the money. You are so wealthy that you can afford to buy six shilling volumes. He is so poor that he won't "run to" more than three-and-sixpence "cloth," and two-and-sixpence "paper." You see you have got to pay for your reputed wealth, even in the matter of

the stuff you read. That is why people come to England and write books about you.

Go about London with your eyes open, and note down all the many other indications of the richness of some of its people that you may come across. See the lines of palatial clubs in Pall Mall. Consider the ground value of allotments in Park Lane. Walk round some of the "squares" and "places" and "roads" in Mayfair and Belgravia, and think of the number of people who can afford to keep up not only the great houses they occupy for a few months in town each year, but also the several others in different parts of England and Scotland and Wales which are theirs. Go out into the country, the first time you can get clear of the Hub, and contemplate some of the latter. Remember the extent of some of the great estates which embrace the land that London is built upon. Go into restaurants where the price of being assisted into your overcoat is half a crown. Look at the very streets themselves, full of costly motor-cars and expensive electric broughams. Go to Henley and see the house-boats, or the yachts at Cowes, or the dresses at Epsom. Think seriously of all the indications of wealth that you are able to discern—and remember that neither London nor England seriously set themselves out to

make a display of it. It is important to remember this. While there is ample extravagance in England, there is very little ostentation for the mere sake of ostentation. While there is a luxury surpassing that of most other countries, it does not advertise. Whilst the wealth of England is enormous, it never throws itself in your face. Possibly it remembers the poverty that counterbalances it,—and maybe it is a little ashamed.

The longer he is in England, and the more he sees of it, a stranger from a far country must more and more be impressed by the great richness which surrounds him. It is not alone the granite instead of the wire, the marble instead of the wall-paper, the number of the people who make a business of amusing themselves, or the exaggerated prices which they are prepared to pay for things they do not want, that strike him with a sense of the fulness of England's coffers, or help him to realise, so far as he is capable of realising, her great resources. Every day he finds out new and striking instances of them both, and always in some new form. Every week he acquires a deeper insight into, and a wider comprehension of, the world influence of her wealth. Every year he is here he learns more about the capabilities with which her fortunes endow her.

And always a wider knowledge increases the awe and wonder with which he cannot but regard her powers.

Our new countries are rich too—perhaps richer potentially than England herself; but the slow centuries have not had time to ripen their wealth as England's has been ripened. We stand as yet on the very threshold of our civilisation. Across it lie the years to come, with all the promise and all the interest of the unknown. England takes pride in her past. We look to our future. But not until our future has developed, has shown us what it means, can we expect to realise in our own countries anything of the wealth that is realisable in England, even to the most casual of observers. We do not really know our own countries yet. Through long ages, while mankind developed himself and what had been given him for his own, our lands have lain in a dim prehistoric past, of which any knowledge we may have comes alone from the Book of Nature. A century has hardly elapsed since Australia passed from the reckoning of geological into historical time. And so the very sense of our newness makes excuse for our deep amazement at the wealth of older lands. Their conditions of life, their roots of life, their aspects of life are different to ours. Our cities,

for their size, may be as good, sometimes better, places to live in than theirs. Our legislative machinery may be newer and more adapted to modern conditions; our educational methods more suitable for the general culture of the people. In all that goes with the business of living we may be able to hold our own with them, may surpass them in some respects. We may solve social problems which they have not yet turned their attention to, may have learned lessons that are still to be conned by them. But always remains our amazement at the two extremes of their being, always they bring us over the borders of Wonderland. Their wealth, their luxury; their cultivation of arts which we have not yet had time to seriously contemplate; their civilisation, their strange class distinctions: but, above all, the great wealth and the great poverty of their people, stir our wondering faculties more than any other things can ever do. When we behold their wealth, we are as poor children brought suddenly into a rich child's nursery, and lost in astonishment at the number and profusion of toys strange to us. When we see their poverty, we are Pharisees who thank God that we are not as these others. But in either case are we beset with a great amazement.

CHAPTER X

THE POVERTIES

ONE Sunday afternoon in December of last year the writer stood in a window that looks out upon Northumberland Avenue and catches a view of a little bit of the Thames Embankment. It was not possible to see far down the latter, because of the Charing Cross railway bridge. The yellow mists came in from the yellow waters of the river and swirled about the wintry skeletons of little trees in the Embankment Gardens. It was cold and cheerless outside, where there was no fire and no electric light, and the short dim December day was already fading into early evening.

Out of the mists came a skirl of feeble music, followed presently by the bedraggled band that perpetrated it, and the band by a sad, tired-looking procession composed of many kinds of men. There were old men and young men, fairly well-dressed men, men just in the first stages of neediness, athletic men and decrepit

men, very ragged men, defiant men and abject men—many and various kinds of men, and hardly two men alike. But there was one point of resemblance which distinguished the whole unhappy column. Nearly every man was a hungry man. That was evident enough in the pinched, sallow faces, in the tucked-up, stooping gait, in the weary, perfunctory shuffle of the march. It was hardly a "march," it was rather a dreary, painful, derelict, attenuated mob crawling dejectedly towards a common goal.

One made inquiries. It was a detachment of the Army of the Workless, which was to concentrate this afternoon upon Trafalgar Square. And so, being interested, and desirous for one's own satisfaction of comparing the unemployed of London with their brethren of Sydney and Melbourne, one took heavy overcoat, and woollen comforter, and thick gloves—for it was bitterly cold outside where the hungry manœuvred without any of these necessaries—and went by devious byways towards the foot of Nelson's column. And how shiveringly cold it was outside! The wind nipped in through coat and comforter and warm clothes and all, until one regretted the pleasant room with the lights and the bright fire.

High overhead, the little one-armed man with the lined face who had saved England a century

ago turned his back upon the motley gathering surging about the square, behind and below, and gazed out across Whitehall and Westminster —almost as if he could see down the Channel, across the Bay, and past St. Vincent to Trafalgar itself. He, at any rate, had no interest in unemployed demonstrations. From the north side of the monument's massive base fervid and sometimes angry orators harangued the three thousand and odd dejected men who had streamed in from all the squalid places where they lived about London to voice their want, and to make protest against it in the face of the wealthiest quarter of the metropolis. Lazarus had come to sit in the gate. And all the time he sat in it Dives sped by incuriously in his motor-car.

If the fragmentary procession which had dribbled in from the Embankment by way of Northumberland Avenue was strangely varied, hungry, and incongruous, the assemblage between the base of the column and the basins of the fountains was infinitely more so. A hungry crowd—a really hungry and cold multitude—is strange to an Australian. There is something indefinably ominous in its dejected silence—something of sullen, apathetic suffering almost too spiritless to voice itself—which suggests a breaking strain, a nearness to a danger

point, a slow burning fuse that leads to a powder magazine. There is a sense of being close to something that is liable to "go off" suddenly.

One walked about through the meeting, ever conscious that warm clothing, and having recently been fed, were good reasons for personal unpopularity. And so one was not surprised at being curtly requested to "Go to hell," when one attempted to open up a conversation with a thin man who coughed strenuously at intervals and spat always. It was obvious that the proper place for a thick overcoat and a comforter and gloves was outside the crowd. Therefore one prowled about the sad outskirts and listened to the speeches of the orators—who, at any rate, and with one exception, did not look as if they suffered from starvation.

The hunger in the men's faces—it might almost have moved to tears Landseer's solid lions crouching at the four corners! If you have ever experienced hunger—even the temporary pinch incidental to two days' shortage of army beef and biscuits—you might understand. But if you have never missed a meal in your life because you could not get it, it might not be so easy. One had been hungry, and so could a little comprehend the listlessness and dejection of these men.

There was a red banner on the platform, on which was inscribed in white letters the legend, "The Freedom of the Working Classes is Slavery or Starvation," but contemplation of it did not excite the crowd. The crowd was too genuinely empty to become excited about anything. It must have been a woefully uninteresting audience to harangue. It was miserably unresponsive. Several raucous demagogues succeeded one another upon the pedestal, and one or two of them really made some very pretty points, and scored what should have been quite palpable hits. But the crowd refused to be hit. It just shuffled its feet, and stood with its hands in its pockets, and by its very silence was more eloquent as to its misery and its bitter need than any one of the speakers who addressed it succeeded in being.

Towards the end, however, there rose up a thin, unhealthy, miserable man—with yet a fierce vitality in his bearing, and just that desperate, wrathful eye that catches you and holds you,—who seemed to stir them a little. He was frankly revolutionary. His logic was avowedly the logic of the tightened waist-belt —unambiguous and direct, and quite without compromise. There was something in the man, showing clearly enough that he meant what he said. Obviously, he was not seeking

a seat on the London County Council, or a passage into Parliament. It was hunger that loosened his tongue.

Sometimes his voice cracked and broke; sometimes he stopped to cough. Always the wind fluttered his rags. He was a strange, terrible, uncouth figure, as one silhouetted him from below against the eddying wreaths of mist that made his background. Truly, he was a man of wrath—hungry, reckless wrath,—a veritable *sans culotte*. Now and then he screamed at his audience; often he shook his fist at the National Gallery, or waved his claw-like open hand at the drifting greyness overhead; sometimes he spat fiercely, one almost fancied, into the white, upturned faces at his feet. And intermittently he coughed as if his words were choking him.

But he stirred that tired crowd. The Prime Minister, he shrieked, was the most callous Prime Minister that England had ever known. If his hearers had half the pluck and energy of the men of former days they would do deeds which would strike terror into the hearts of their rulers. Let them go where the wealth was, and make the wealthy uncomfortable by their presence. To achieve anything they would have to put the fears of the masses into the hearts of the classes. They should make

the latter see that they (the masses) were not only prepared to make violent speeches, but to carry out their threats. And so forth.

This is a mild version of what he said—a very mild and second-hand version. The burden of it all was that the East should raid the West. It was a wild, half-mad speech,—but it caught on. It took that weary, hungry concourse by the shoulders and shook it. It appealed to its temper, it moved it. Low, sullen, growling responses drifted up to the eager speaker. A hum of approval greeted each savage period, gasped out in fierce earnestness.

But it was only lip-fervour that they gave him back. When he screeched for men to follow him to Park Lane, no one came forward. They were too weak for his "form." A hundred animated with his spirit might have made trouble,—but they were not to be found in *that* crowd. As the darkness came down over the column and the crowded square, and one departed back to warmth and shelter—while the meeting departed to cold and wretchedness,—one felt that all the raiding these dispirited, half-dead men would do would be harmless. Thirty well-fed policemen to the three thousand ill-nourished, shivering weaklings. That would be sufficient.

But the last speaker had said things that were not easily to be forgotten, even if they were but half believed. He had told of a life that one had only read of, whilst *his* experience was, without doubt, first hand and real. And all through the following week one thought at intervals of his burning words, his wild earnestness, his passionate invective. That lean and ragged revolutionary haunted one like an evil thought, and his sad, angry speech was always sounding in one's ears. And then one determined to go, and see if what he had said was true. One almost *had* to go and see, in order to lay the ghost of the wild man. And so one went,—and was rather sorry for it afterwards.

Where one went does not matter. It is sufficient to say that it was into a district inhabited almost exclusively by the class of workless working-men who had attended the meeting in Trafalgar Square—the class of the unskilled labourer, the "bullocker," the hewer of wood and drawer of water class, the class which does the hardest manual labour when it can get it to do for the lowest wage. You approach it from the west by way of a disgusting railway that runs through a wilderness of depressingly sordid suburbs. It lies to the east of E.C.

It is not, in the strict sense of the word, a

region of slums. Slums are archaic, and this delightful borough is quite a modern growth, as things modern count about London. Its streets are well laid out, and wide and airy, and the house-fronts gay with the ornamentation of stucco. It is so new that sometimes, here and there, one comes across vacant building lots. It is so populous that ever the jerry-builder erects along the ample thoroughfares more thin-walled edifices. It is so miserable and wretched as to out-slum Slumdom in slummy characteristics. It is so hungry, always, as to make the four seasons of the year into one long season of famine. And its people are the most hopeless that one has ever seen. It is a sink of wretchedness.

In the middle of it all dwells a community of noblemen. If to live lives of poverty among scenes of squalor and debasement, to give up all that makes existence a thing to be appreciated, to labour incessantly for little other reward than a light of gratitude in tired eyes, to have nothing of success to show the outside world, to take upon shoulders never meant to bear such burdens the troubles and sorrows of the saddest spot in England, is noble,—the members of this brotherhood of men are amongst the finest gentlemen in the British Islands.

It is an order of some curious description of Anglican monks. It clothes itself in an ugly garment of black, and girdles itself about the middle with a black cord, and wears dirty boots. It sleeps in rooms as plain and unattractive as most that lie about its dwelling-place. It feeds on next to nothing. It labours strenuously and ceaselessly amongst the people of this sordid district. It asks no reward, and gets none—and nearly every member of it is an Oxford or a Cambridge graduate. Think of it—men who are used to all the refinements and beauties of life, voluntarily giving their best years to the helping of unhappy creatures who, one believes, are hardly able even to appreciate the sacrifice involved. They have surrendered everything that they have been taught was the right of their kind. They have come into a world where nothing is for them, and everything for others. And of what they do the others have no record.

They are wonderful men. One forgets to laugh at the silly costume, or to look upon its wearing as an affectation; all that one sees, and respects, and cannot but regard with an inexpressible reverence, is the life of unselfishness and real Christianity which is theirs.

It was one of these men who showed the writer what he had never before realised—the

abject, hopeless, bitter, unending poverty of England. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, in Australia, to compare it with. And until he had seen it he is free to confess he never would have believed in its existence.

We went to one house that had a ragged blanket hanging in the window. All about in the street were little pale-faced children, all dirty, some sick, and not a few unmistakably the victims of a loathsome disease, about which it is unnecessary to go into particulars. Their little faces were often literally wolfish in expression. That was hunger, said the brother. Now hunger in a grown man is not a pretty thing. When you have seen hungry babies, you will never forget it. They were not playing. They just stood about and looked hungry. It was the only amusement they had any energy for. The brother knocked at the door. A gaunt woman opened it, and immediately began to sniffle. We went in.

There was no furniture in the room, no fire in the grate, hardly any light, except what streamed in through the rents in the blanket draping the window. All that it contained was a cheap coffin, with a dead man in it—and the man was a cheap sort of man, too. You could buy him by the dozen, at very little cost, in the streets outside. He had died

because, being in a state of starvation, he had been imprudent enough to catch cold. It only took three days to kill him, said the brother.

Some dead faces are not sad to look upon. Nearly always this is a suggestion of realised peace and rest which takes away from the horror. Some even make you feel glad to understand that death is not, after all, such a terrible thing. But if the faces of all men wore the look of this man's when they died, no living man could bear to contemplate his end. No lines had been smoothed out, no single mark of sorrow and want had been taken away. He lay in his coffin just as he must have lain on the floor when he died—hungry, famished, starved.

"Oh! 'e wur a good 'usbind," wailed the widow; "'e wur a good bloke."

Poor, happy, quiet man—at least one incoherent soul sorrowed for you!

We went away, and saw other things that were sadder than this. But that dead face always seems to typify the greatest sadness of England. One has written elsewhere of what seems the best of it to a stranger. The worst of it will always remain as the pinched countenance of an unshaven corpse which looked hungry.

We waded through squalor for a long three

hours. The quiet brother said very little, offered no suggestions, nor asked for any. He was content to show what one had come to see. His strong, kind face seldom varied its grave expression. Even when he proffered loving words of sympathy and help to some broken woman querulously lamenting the loss of a child, or hopelessly reviewing the chances of existence in the near future, he did it with the same quiet, half-resigned tone of recognition of the inevitable. He accounted for nothing, questioned nothing—was content to let what was to be seen impress itself upon the stranger in its own impressive way.

One could not hope to make a realisable picture of all one saw. It was terribly varied, and yet terribly monotonous. The variety lay in the different kinds of misery that were everywhere; the monotony in the one unending tale of a struggle against starvation. Whatever the other complications, the latter was always present. There were places where there had been diphtheria; one or two had had some experience of typhoid; there was rheumatism, idiocy, blindness—a host of unhappy things—and, always, hunger.

But the children—who could ever forget the children? The little stunted bodies, the thin, white faces, the spindle legs, the lank hair, the

sore mouths, the tired, apathetic, listless bearing of them all. There were old men at five, and aged dames of three, in the doorways and passages. There were little cripples seated on the gutter sides, and foolish-looking babies who hung over the shoulders of their weary mothers, and were themselves obviously weary of life after a few short months of it. There was nothing vital anywhere amongst them. All were indifferent to the beauties of a world that had shown them nothing but ugliness. And what kind of men and women were they to become, and what kind of children were they to beget in their turn, and what was to be the destiny of a race like theirs? Who could say?

A great deal was being done. Charitable people were giving largely of their substance to great newspaper funds, which had been raised to combat the devil of starvation for the poor creatures who could not fight it themselves.

There is one great thing to be said for London. It always gives when it is asked. But the problem goes deeper than that. There is no real relief for these people. The Outer Empire has no use for them. One only has to look at them to see that. What is it to be for them, say, in a few generations? Will they continue as they are now? What will it be? It is too vast a puzzle for easy, off-

hand solution. But it is a puzzle which England will have to face and solve. And it is a puzzle for which one is eternally thankful that one's own country may perhaps be spared.

Truly, the fiery orator of Trafalgar Square had spoken of what was. His fierce eloquence had reason for itself. He was no exaggerator. He knew his book by heart. One came away from that sad place with a distinct sense of having been down into hell. And hell was hardly three-quarters of an hour from Piccadilly and Park Lane.

CHAPTER XI

THE SOLDIERS

ONE sunny morning, about five years ago, a regiment of British infantry marched through the Market Square of Bloemfontein on its way to the railway station. It was ragged, it was dirty, and it was obviously foot-sore. The men in the ranks were thin, and brown, and bearded. Some of its officers limped painfully. It was in "fours," and in the midst of the column had been placed those men who, owing to the disrepair of their nether garments, were too inadequately clad to conform to the rules of decency which obtain in even such towns as Bloemfontein was at the time. Now and again passed by a man who should have been in hospital—shaky, wan, and weak; and always the aspect of that regiment suggested work, work, work—work of a kind that wears down strong frames, makes stout fellows gaunt, puckers the skin at the corners of the eyes, and leaves little perpendicular

anxious lines between the brows. The colonel, a hawk-nosed man with grizzled moustaches, strode at its head; behind him trotted a little brown-faced boy with a bugle; and in the rear came ominous men bearing battered stretchers. The brown canvas of those stretchers sagged stiffly, and on one or two of them was a little darker brown in irregular patches. The column stirred up a dust as it went that matched its boots and its clothing and its dingy helmets, and combined with the faded khaki uniforms and the stained cartridge belts to make a colour note of dismal yellow for the whole scene. In doorways and at windows were the wondering Dutch, and about the pavements and the kerbstones stood men from all the world, also in khaki, who criticised the column as it passed.

A private of the line grinned and chuckled to himself as he stood looking, so that some who were hard by asked him the reason of his inward mirth. In the peculiar language of his kind, which, though picturesque, needs interpretation, he explained with glee, that "them ragged backed beggars" (that is not quite accurately chronicled, but it must suffice) were a certain crack regiment of Guards, which at home was apt to give itself airs, but which, in the democracy of warfare, was reduced to a

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sartorial level with its less conspicuously gaudy brothers in arms.

"Ho!" he said, "none o' th' bloomin' Buck'-nam Palace touch abaht 'em now! Not arf!" Their aspect pleased him very much. And it pleased those of us who had never before seen a regiment of Guards, at home or abroad,—but for a different reason to that which moved our informant.

They looked so "fit." It was true that they were dirty,—but so were we all. They were thin, and hungry, and unshaven—for none of us had the march from Paardeberg been a well-fed excursion through a streetful of hair-dressers. But their rifles were clean, and their ammunition pouches were full, and there was a spring in the step, and a poise of the head, and a swing of the hungry bodies, that spake of hard condition. One thought of all one's previous ideas of the Guards and their gorgeous home attire, and looked on that ragged stream of workmen going to their work, and somehow felt pleased that England had such Englishmen —such stalwart, business-like, efficient Englishmen to fight her battles. That one was privileged to see them for the first time from such a point of view seemed something to be for ever glad about.

Time went on, as Time unfortunately will,

and the war went into history books, and many things happened; and on a morning of last year the writer, exploring London, turned out of St. James's Park in order to take a short cut across the Horse Guards Parade into Whitehall. But the parade was full of soldiers in red coats, who wore immense things on their heads, not unlike the hair arrangements of Fijian dandies, only that they were a little more grotesquely absurd. Company behind company of Noah's ark soldiers in scarlet, stood a regiment of Guards,— bearskinned, and pipeclayed, and bright buttoned. The colonel and the adjutant, and the majors, pranced on horseback before and about it, and the band discoursed music upon a flank. Held in check by large policemen, a crowd gaped admiration from all sides.

It was the regiment that had marched through the sunny square in Bloemfontein five years before—hungry, dirty, tattered, businesslike, and efficient. It looked very pretty. The red coats contrasted brilliantly with the grey buildings in the background. The pipeclayed belts contrasted with the red coats. The gold lace of the officers and the polished brass of the band flashed in the pale sunlight. The glory of the regiment's apparel is indescribable.

But where had the regiment gone? Where were those half-thousand fighting men who had marched with a spring to whatever might befall them. What had become of it as a force to be reckoned with? The rifles were there, and the little vicious bayonets, but where was the battalion that we had known in Africa,—where were the men who had swung through the dusty streets of the little Free State capital, looking so keen and so fit, and so good to belong to? Could this species of ballet really be the same Guards? It was the same—the same historic corps that had helped to make English history for more than two hundred years. But how different, how pitiably different! Not that the men did not look healthy and serviceable—it was their clothing that made them grotesque, and suggested inefficiency, and caused one to experience a little shiver of shame and disgust.

For it seemed a wretched thing to think that these fine soldiers, whom we knew aforetime for what they really were worth, should have been turned into a troupe of mountebanks by the unsightly, expensive, and ridiculous dress which it was their sad lot to wear in peace time. Why did the English spend money in turning men into fools, when it would have been so easy to show them off as

men, and so wise to make the people understand that the waging of war requires men, not clothing? Why tax the people to maintain that monument of ugliness, the bearskin, while the guns of the British army remain the laughing-stock of Europe? Why—but how many whys there are! All that was to be done was to pass on and feel sorry. The Guards in this aspect were hardly worth looking at. As they had been in the Market Square at Bloemfontein they were a memory worth treasuring.

But behind all these reflections, which, after all, are only one's own and not of much value, lies this one—that the English army on a peace footing seems to be maintained almost wholly with an idea of teaching the people of England that there really is such a thing as the "pomp and circumstance of war."

War is a mean business, to be got over as soon as may be—despite the old barbaric fascination of taking part in it,—and it is all business. The modern soldier must have two essential attributes. He must shoot straight, and he must endure. His courage, of course, is taken for granted; and, indeed, it is a pleasant thing to believe that there are not many real cowards in the ranks of humanity. But he must be able to take punishment, and he

must be tolerably sure of killing his man at least five hundred yards away. The aspect of the English army in peace conveys no suggestion of either of these absolutely necessary qualifications in the soldier. It rather gives the possible recruit an impression that his first duty lies towards his clothing. The system goes to unnecessary expense in making him into a theatrical person most useful for ceremonial occasions, whilst it stints his pay, pares down his pension, and is niggardly with the practice ammunition, which he needs in order to qualify as a good shot. But it makes him the glory of the housemaid, and the soldier of the nurse-girl's ideals. And that seems to be the reason why it hopes he will enlist. It is hard to believe that the two metal-clad mounted men with the foolish uniforms who dwell in the little stone boxes in Whitehall, or the top-heavy redcoats who mount guard outside Buckingham Palace, can appear other than absurd and anomalous to anyone except children. But it is unfortunately the case, one cannot help realising, that to the vast majority, of Londoners at any rate, they typify all that is soldierly and all that is necessary for the security of the Empire. And it is this idea, infinitely more than the conservatism of the War Office, that retards the reformation of the

British army, and has caused it to become what, from the quality of its material it should never be—a jest and a byword.

Now that is a hard and bitter thing to write; but consider the army as it is to-day. What has been rightly called the "gun scandal"—it should have been the "gun outrage"—has been well ventilated in the English press, and one can only refer to it here as one of many poor and inadequate features with which one is struck, as the merest outsider, on seeing the army at home. We have the patriotic and fearless testimony of a great soldier concerning the present condition of English military affairs. Lord Roberts has given it as his opinion that the army is not quite so good now as it was in 1899. Everybody is well aware how "good" it was then. If we accept his evidence, there should be something to account for the fact that after the dearly bought South African lesson there should have been no improvement, no root-and-branch reformation—nothing but the experimenting of amateurs, the appointment of useless commissions, and the alteration of dress patterns.

If you come to think of it, might not the very ultimate reason for this standing still be expressed in five words—*The army is a toy.* The English *will* have their red-coated men to

play with. They *will* have their magnificent horse artillery, horse guard, and foot guard uniforms—even if the price of them means quick-firing guns, useful cavalry, and working infantry. They *will* see nothing incongruous in the holding of high military positions by members of the royal family, who have not seen service, while there are generals, and to spare, who know what war really is. They *will* have such useless pageantry as the trooping of colours, horseback quadrilles, and musical artillery drives—even if the infantry who troop the colours cannot become marksmen ; if the cavalrymen who train their horses to dance do not know, each and everyone of them, how to shoe their mounts ; if the fine artillery who drive between little posts at Islington are armed with guns that were obsolete nearly a decade ago.

It is not the soldiers' fault that the army is not what it might be. The material is good enough ; it is the way it is mishandled and wasted. And one believes that the conclusion which most people, who look at the question from a point of view outside the English one must inevitably arrive at, is that the British soldier is not to be compared with the British sailor, because the British people will not take him seriously. The army is a toy ; the navy

is a tool. Whilst the wearing of uncouth and uselessly gaudy apparel remains the man-in-the-street's ideal of soldiering, the army will remain, as it is to-day, cruelly handicapped for the work which is its *raison d'être*. The rifle and the bayonet and the bullet are overshadowed by the bearskin and the plume, and efficiency is sacrificed for appearance. It does not matter, or rather it is forgotten that it matters, that the cult of soldiering must inevitably find its scope in the former, and that the only way by which a soldier can possibly justify his existence is by killing people, so to speak, in his shirt sleeves. But it matters enormously that he must be capable of vieing with flags, and Venetian masts, and festoons of coloured paper for the purposes of street decoration, when the King goes to open Parliament, or when the Lord Mayor does the honours of London to foreign potentates. That is extremely important.

It might be supposed from all this that the writer seeks to exploit a crazy idea as to neatness, order, uniformity, and picturesqueness counting for nothing in the organisation of an army; that he wishes to contend that a battalion of vermin-infested men in unpatched pants is necessarily a better battalion than one which is well and decently clad. But he does

not. The point he clumsily labours to make is that the soldier dressed *as* a soldier would be infinitely more inspiring to the people, and would give them a better notion of the solemn earnestness of military affairs, than the soldier dressed as a footman, in a livery which is as expensive and grotesque as it is valueless and obsolete. Even to those in authority who recognise the necessity of an efficient fighting force for the defence of the Empire, and who continually exercise their minds over the question of its maintenance and extension, one would expect this view to commend itself. For would not that beast of burden, the taxpayer, who, as a rule, does not look very intelligently upon such questions, be more impressed by the realisation of efficiency than by the display of meaningless man-millinery? Would he not, after all, be more content to pay an extra twopence in the pound to maintain for his protection a fighting man who *looked* like a fighting man, who evidently *was* a man able, ready, and willing to do battle for him in the hour of need, than for one who would of necessity be compelled to shed or exchange every article of his clothing but his boots and his shirt before he could satisfactorily take a hand in "a willing go"?

To put it another way, would not you or I,

—being puny individuals desirous of getting through an angry and violent mob, and finding it necessary to hire as an escort some athletic and capably pugnacious being in order to accomplish our purpose,—would we not be infinitely better pleased, and consider that we were getting infinitely more value for our money, were we accompanied by a brawny person in his shirt sleeves armed with an effective stick, than if we had to trust ourselves to a similarly brawny and efficient guardian dressed in a top-hat which he must not get smashed in, a tight and heavy overcoat which he must not get torn, patent leather boots which he must not soil, carrying a heavy portmanteau in one hand, and equipped with a riding switch? We would not quarrel with the one if he was not so immaculately attired as the other, because we would feel beforehand that he looked as if he could do himself and ourselves justice. But in the elaborately tailored individual we might think that we detected disabilities.

And so with the soldier. After he had become used to him as a "workman," the taxpayer would, one thinks, wonder why he had ever been satisfied to regard him as part of the scenery. And he would be more content when he found that, for the cost of one

decorative soldier, he could get two workmen-soldiers who were better men. Let him realise so much, and then genuine Army Reform begins. It will not begin until he has done so.

But whether the nation garbs its soldiers in cheap and serviceable kit, and spends the money it used to waste in elaborately clothing him on better food for him, and better arms for him, there still will remain the vexed question of who is to do the soldiering. Volumes have been written on the subject, innumerable suggestions made, countless speeches recorded, endless schemes advocated,—and still England has not come to know her own mind about it. Is she to depend wholly upon a standing army—which, by a pleasing self-deception, she refuses to consider technically as a standing army (*vide* the annual passing of the Mutiny Act),—or is she to trust to the manhood that is in her own sons to vindicate her claim to nationhood? Is she to defend herself with regulars, or with militiamen, or with volunteers, or with a few, or many, of each? Is she to have a land force which will be a real insurance against the day of calamity, or is she to trust altogether, to "put all her money" on the invincibility of her sailors?

At the present time she is a little confused

over the matter. Sometimes she says, "Yes, indeed, it's a very serious business—let me think." At others she exclaims petulantly, "Oh—you and your bogeys—don't bother me; I've got the shop to attend to." Sometimes, and in her saner moments, she tries to think about the shop and the question of its inviolability as being somehow bound up together. But she never seems to take the whole question quite seriously. She never seems adequately to realise that it is to her people that, in the end, — in the final struggle for her existence as the Englishman's country,—she must look. Does she ever realise that if they fail her she is doomed? Or does she not take their enthusiasm for her just a little bit too much for granted? Well—it is not for an outlander to say. But perhaps he may be allowed to institute a little comparison, which may be odious or not, just as it pleases the reader to regard it.

It is, of course, more or less absurd to compare the conditions of Australian defence with those of England. England has a thousand and a half years of bloody war to look back upon—war that was often a struggle for her existence—whilst we have only so much of the late skirmish in South Africa as our volunteer contingents participated in. All the ex-

perience is England's own; we have it only at second hand. The foe has ever knocked at England's gates; with us his very being has, until quite recently, been problematical. If England's land armament is weak, and the quality of her munitions of war poor, ours are weaker and poorer. Our actual means of driving back an invader from our shores—the guns and the rifles, and the ammunition factories—are not to be compared, even proportionately, with England's.

But—and this is a "but" that is worth noticing—every man in the Commonwealth is liable for military service between ages which practically bound his physically efficient life. The Defence Act ordaining this was one of the first measures enacted by the Federal Legislature, and it was a measure against which, throughout the whole population of the Commonwealth—not even so numerically strong as London's, if you will,—there was hardly raised a voice that anyone considered worth listening to. Where the comparison is to be made between the English people and the Australian people lies in this—that, on our side, the doctrine that it is every man's privilege to personally assist in the defence of his country is accepted, whilst here in England, one is told, such service is not even regarded as a duty. To those who enunciate

it is hurled back the single retort—"*Conscription!*"

Conscription,—the very idea of any form of liability for military service under compulsion is—say those who make most protest against it—abhorrent to the English, and utterly impossible for England. And so, even "some form" of it, to quote the words of a committee which is said to have sinned by referring to it, is not even to be tolerated. It must not be so much as hinted at. Are Englishmen to demean themselves by fighting for their country because they are told they must do so? Must not the principle of a volunteer army be strenuously preserved? No, Englishmen must be free—free to occupy themselves as they please at all times, free to follow up their businesses in business hours, and to amuse themselves in their hours of rest and recreation, free to become a confused and helpless mob,—one does not say "panic-stricken,"—when their country has to be saved from ceasing to be their country.

We do not speak of conscription in Australia. Its application, according to European methods, would be more unpopular, and less possible, there than in England. But the liability to serve is looked upon as no hardship. Nor should it be here. And, indeed, one

honestly believes that, amongst those capable of serving, it would not be. It is the old stickling for tradition and precedent, the old, slow hanging on to bygone times and conditions, so characteristic of the English, that prompts public speakers and newspapers to oppose any idea of what should be almost an inevitable condition of citizenship. Conscription is unnecessary. But liability for service, and consequent training for service, is not conscription. Call it duty, honour, manliness, patriotism,—any other name you please.

In all this one frankly has no thought for the feelings of those who are opposed to war, or rather who believe that war may be done away with. Nor has one, having seen a little of it, any great enthusiasm for warfare. It is everything bad that you may be pleased to call it,—but we are always liable to it. When the necessity for policemen has ceased to exist, we may have universal peace, or when brain power is more evenly distributed than it is at present. What one has had to say is only for those who recognise that, terrible as they are, we are always liable to armed conflicts between the nations. A universal Utopia is still some distance away.

And so, again, one expresses perhaps a worthless belief that until the English take

their soldiers seriously, and learn to recognise generally that citizenship carries its military liabilities, their army will remain more or less unsatisfactory. It may be a pretty toy, but it cannot be a useful tool—until it is stripped of its paint and tinsel and rags, and made as much the real pride of the people of England as is the navy.

CHAPTER XII

THE SAILORS

THERE is no lack of expert and informing criticism concerning the British navy. Several talented gentlemen having to do with the daily press of England have taken it, and all that belongs to it, under their several wings, and from day to day, and week to week, we are kept aware of its progress and its backslidings. These gentlemen act as interpreters between the Admiralty and the public. Sometimes they sit in judgment. At all times they freely express valuable opinions as to matters which they may or may not know all about. Belleville boilers, turbine destroyers, submarines, searchlights, gunnery, navigation, the birching of boys, the retiring of admirals, the awarding of pensions, the conduct of canteens —each and every complicated matter connected with what they delight to refer to as "our first line of defence," or the "senior service," is at the ends of their pens. With an infalli-

bility which is no less admirable than surprising they praise or they condemn, just as a stern sense of justice, a lofty patriotism, or an idealistic enthusiasm may dictate. If a submarine sinks with its hatchway open, a breech-block blows out, or a destroyer buckles, they speedily let us know the why and the how, and the how-not-to of each disaster. It does not matter that most of them have not been to sea. What really matters is that they have made naval affairs their "line," and the interpretation thereof their business. And so we are under an immense debt of gratitude to these gentlemen, and there is no necessity here to venture one's opinions as to the structure of nautical engines of destruction. That has all been done. What this chapter concerns itself with, mainly, is the man who "goes down to the sea in ships." He is almost all that is left for an outlander to observe at first hand.

England has many things about which she may justly pride herself, but it is difficult to remember anything that more justifies pride than her navy, and the men who serve it. If you want to stir yourself into a respect for England's great past, go into Westminster Abbey, and read some of the names on the tombs. If you desire to realise her commercial and financial power, divide your time between

the purlieus of Throgmorton Street and the docks. But if you want to see, and understand, and admire the very best of England and the English, you must look all over the world, wherever there is water to float a gunboat, or any British interests to be served. Portsmouth, or Devonport, or Chatham will explain much to you, but it is really in the distant seas that England does herself most credit. In the great dockyards you see the preparation, the careful working out of the plan. On foreign stations you are best able to realise the results—that is to say, so far as it is possible to realise them without the testimony of actual battle. At any rate, you are able to estimate the value of the man who is to fight the battle.

If you go south — by Port Said, Suez, Aden, Colombo, Fremantle—and then east into fairyland, which is situated to-day in the beautiful islands of the Pacific, you will find one of the quarters where the man of the sea is at some of his work. The ships he does it in are not very impressive craft as a rule—because the Australian station is more or less of a scrap-heap for the discarded ironmongery of European waters,—but in the ways of the man himself you are sure to take delight. Here he is to an extent "on his own." Great

responsibilities are his, and the exercise of a diplomacy which his training has made no specialty of is essential to the successful discharge of his duties. His mistakes may not matter very much here—but they will make trouble in Europe. His successes count enormously — but it is only here that they are appreciated at their full value. They are seldom reported for the benefit of the taxpayer, and hardly anyone knows of them but the traders and the missionaries and the natives. Nevertheless, they often remain great and abiding landmarks in the history of this last civilisation of the globe. The English captains have done more for the islands than has been, or will ever be, generally credited to the list of their good deeds. Time after time, in isolated places far from the telegraph line, they have been called upon to settle questions which might have developed into momentous issues, to declare little wars on their own responsibility, or to restore law and order to communities that had fallen into anarchy. In that part of the world, at any rate, their record is one long series of successes ; and it is hardly possible to meet with any man—black, white, or brown—who does not place implicit reliance in their sense of justice, their ability, and their capacity for dealing with complicated cases.

There was a certain little captain commanding one of those old, square-rigged cruisers of twenty years ago—this story is told by a coastguardsman in Kent—who, though diminutive in stature, was a lion of physical and mental strength. In a certain group of islands a missionary had been murdered, and the little captain brought his little ship into their midst to exact the usual penalties which are considered necessary in order to discourage the native pastime of missionary hunting. The chief man of the tribe responsible for the crime was a truculent person, indisposed to accede to the little captain's demands that the actual murderers should be handed over to him.

"'E come aboard," said the coastguardsman, "an' 'e was a saucy laad, near seven foot 'igh, with a 'ead of 'air like a mop, an' them little scratchin' combs stuck all through it. 'Arf a dozen of 'is bucks come with 'im,—an' the old man, dressed up to kill, waits for 'im on the quarter-deck. Well, me boyo goes aft,—up to where the owner was standin',—an' folds 'is arms, an' chucks a chest, an' when 'e's told 'e must give up the murderers, 'e just laughs—an' then spits fair an' square in the old man's face! Fancy that—*spits in 'is face!* There was a guard drawn up along the side, an' if the skipper 'ad lifted 'is 'and that nigger was a

dead man. But 'e never. 'E just took down 'is pane o' glass—eyeglass, I mean—put it away carefully in a little leather case, after carefully wipin' it with 'is angkerchef, wipes 'is face, puts 'is angkerchef away, an' walks up to me brave boy, who stood with 'is arms folded, lookin' awful proud an' defiant. 'My man,' 'e says, very quiet an' slow, 'my man,—you'll never do that again—because,' 'e says, 'you won't be able to.' An' with that he hauls off, an' lands that buck nigger one on the jaw that knocks 'im slitherin' along the deck—knocks him five yards along, I give you my word—an' he lies in a heap groanin' an' bleedin', for 'is jaw was broke, an' all slewed round. 'See to 'im,' says the old man to the doctor, walkin' into 'is cabin. Them other niggers let go a yell, an' went overboard,—an' I tell you, under an hour's time we 'as three fine, 'ealthy murderers—brought off in canoes be 'alf the village—safe an' sound in irons. I give you my word, there wasn't an island in that group afterwards where the old man's slightest wish wasn't law."

This "method of barbarism" is not quoted here as being an infallible and satisfactory method of subjugating coloured races, but only as instancing something of that promptitude in seizing the essentials of a situation which is nearly always characteristic of the English

naval officer. Under the provocation of a loathsome insult, our little captain kept his temper, and did exactly the thing which was most likely to impress the native mind. He might have instilled into the understandings of recalcitrant headmen, by other and more regular means, the knowledge that it is not wise to publicly insult the commanders of ships of war upon their own quarter-decks, but he would never have established his *mana*, — his personal prestige, — to half the extent he succeeded in doing by the course he took.

But it is not only in the South Seas. The whole world over the English captains are always doing efficient things unobtrusively. Is there ever an emergency that they do not rise to, or a contingency to which they are not equal? And so few of their achievements are ever recorded outside the official reports, which they must themselves make, that the world fails to realise how really great they often are. For one thing that is perforce done "in the lime-light," there are a dozen that the public never hear of. For it is a truth that, as a whole, the navy advertises very little.

Of course, the naval captain is not the whole service, but his is, one would think, the rank, and he the man, that stands most typically for

it. He is neither too young nor too old. He is a man in his prime. He has "been through the mill," and his higher responsibilities lie before him. He is the tested and tempered tool which has been passing through the workshops all the years since he first went to sea as a midshipman. He has withstood the dangers attendant upon that early admission to manhood which the gun-room confers. Most boys are not called upon to go through the fire until at least eighteen or nineteen. He must face his ordeal long before. It is the same through all his successive steps. Great responsibility, for himself and others, he has incurred long before other men in other occupations have been trusted to stand alone. Failure has no excuses, and he knows it. And so by the time he has his first independent command he has been tried and proved. The captain may well personify the navy. And it may be said of the navy that it is worthy of its captains.

Amongst such as the writer who, not being quite of the English, yet seek to be in sympathy with them, and to understand them, the difference in the personal element of navy and army is difficult to account for. One does not wish to make unhappy comparisons, and to mention such a difference is only to call up a subject which is often discussed by all who

have seen anything of either service. Why is the naval officer so much better "all round" than his army prototype? Why is not Thomas Atkins the equal of Jack Tar? The reason most often put forward is that in the navy "they catch 'em young"; but behind this we cannot but believe there lies another. And it is surely the same by which, in considering the soldiers, one attempted to account for the difference. The British people take their navy seriously. It is a weapon which must be kept sharp. It is a gun which must be kept clean. It is no toy. Were the English to regard their navy in the same light as they regard their army, it is possible to believe that the grey ships of to-day would be painted gaudy colours, would have their funnels pipe-clayed, and plumes of horsehair dependent from the tompions of their guns. Instead of his neat and serviceable "rig," the bluejacket might be clad in a steel cuirass and wear spurs. Torpedo boats, instead of being black, might be polished until they shone dazzlingly in the sun, and reflected the starlight at night. But in amazing contrast to the lack of sense which he displays in the matter of his soldiers, the Englishman sees to his sailors with a discernment and a wisdom than which he has no better attributes. In these days of huge

armaments, when peace is only secured by the display of competence for war, the sailor is England's saving grace. Europe may laugh and wonder at her army; ruled by amateurs, and armed efficiently as a result of the efforts of newspaper correspondents—but she must take the navy seriously, she must remain respectful of England whilst England has such ships and such sailors. While the ideal of the sailor with the man in the street remains what it is, England is safe. It is to be hoped that that great power in the land shall never come to look upon him as he does upon his brother of the army. Or perhaps it would be, to put it better, if one were to hope that some day the soldiers might be as intelligently regarded by him as are the sailors.

In the evolution of the naval officer there is at least one process which, if he pass successfully through it, is sufficient to ensure that there is something in him. It is, as has been said, a kind of ordeal by fire; and if it does not eliminate the hopelessly unfit from the service during its course, it would seem to have that effect at no great length of time after it is over. Moreover, it is a test in which will be found the explanation of many subsequent results.

For consider the gun-room. Its occupants

constitute a class of manhood—one would not venture to write "boyhood"—which is altogether unique, and as interesting and charming as unique. There can hardly be another breed of boys like this one. With all the life and laughter and irresponsibility of boyhood, it combines the seriousness and responsibility of real manhood. With all the capacity for taking life lightly and easily, it is sternly tutored in its earnestness and hardness. At an age when he would otherwise be of very small importance as a schoolboy, the midshipman makes his entry into a world which judges and spares not. When the most serious considerations of his contemporaries ashore are games, he takes up duties of a kind which they do not realise until they are grown up. While the average boy is carefully shielded and protected from the snares and pitfalls of a sinful world, the embryo admiral must learn to walk amongst them unafraid, and whether he stumbles or keeps erect is entirely his own lookout. He is his own master and his own mentor in ways that are carefully chosen and ordered for the footsteps of the schoolboy. He is a schoolboy himself, with this difference,—that, as he is called upon to undertake the work and the responsibilities of a man, so it is left to himself to take up with or avoid a man's failings. The

fruit of the tree of knowledge is his to pluck, if he so wish, long before the shore-boy may even enter the garden wherein the tree flourishes. If he choose to become expert in the making of cocktails, for instance, or a connoisseur in "splits," he has opportunity to do so. He may acquire a varied and startling knowledge of womankind before he has taken the edge off a razor. If it so please him he may as easily as anyone else discover the damnableness of debt in a serious fashion, even at an age when his prototype on dry land can get no credit at a "tuck-shop." In a score of ways he has to take care of himself. In a dozen ways he has to take care of his career. If he can do neither, he goes under, and is no more seen or heard of—at any rate in the navy. And so, when this pleasant water-fowl, Mr. Midshipman, has at length emerged from the incubator which the gun-room is, it may generally be taken for granted that he has been through a fairly stiff hatching. If he has not been strong enough for it, he does not last long. If he has been strong enough, there are very good chances that he will be strong enough for what is to come afterwards. And so you may find, if you only care to look, that the young commissioned officer is a fine instance of the survival of the

fit. And it is possibly, for these reasons, that he is one of the very best types of the young Englishman that it is possible to come across.

Although one thinks that in the captains one may see the navy most typically and reputably represented, it is not necessary to go higher than the ward-room to find the naval officer in his pleasantest stage, or to see a type which it is possible to like and respect more. There is plenty of interesting and agreeable society in the world for those who love its wider and fresher outlooks. Soldiers of fortune still tell tales that thrill. There are yet—in this dry, prosaic, twentieth century life of ours—numberless wanderers who have wandered with wide eyes, looking upon it as it is, who can help you to a realisation of the romance and charm of it all. But there are few who can inspire you with more interest in it than these younger men of the sea. And that is not always and altogether because they have done or seen much more than you or I may have done or seen if we have been fortunate. It is rather because of the keen and vital manner with which they have gone through life, and the keen and healthy way in which they have appreciated it. Their very enthusiasms are a tonic to the landsman. Their honesty of outlook, frankness of criticism, fearlessness of

comment, and wholesome manliness, are as invigorating as the sea air itself. It may be that the sea air is what endows them with all their agreeable characteristics. But whether it be air, training, or tradition, they are altogether as likeable and lovable as the combination of their fine virtues is rare in other classes of mankind having a more circumscribed outlook.

The writer has had fairly useful opportunities of studying the army in all its ranks, but only limited and scattered ones of making the more intimate acquaintance of the navy. How much or how little of enthusiasm, *esprit de corps*, public spirit, and devotion to his service animate the soldier, he feels fairly competent to judge. For he has known him, and been with him, in the ranks, the non-commissioned ranks, and the commissioned. But with the sailor it is different, and he can only claim such a knowledge of his innermost soul as may be vouchsafed to any looker-on from without. Nevertheless, he has no reluctance in writing it down as his, possibly worthless, opinion that the spirit which animates the navy differs from, and is as superior to, that which obtains in the army, as the motive of a priest differs from, and is better than, that of a coal-heaver. It is not to be wondered at that it should, when you come to think of the

different measure of appreciation which the nation vouchsafes to either service—how it plays with the one as a spoiled child with a toy, and achieves such an earnestness over the other as a farmer with an indispensable implement. But, let the reason be what it may, one cannot but come to the conclusion that the sailor takes himself and his profession more respectfully and more seriously than it is possible for the soldier to do with regard to himself.

It happened that not very long ago the writer was a guest for a few days in the ward-room of a man-o'-war which had just returned to England from, let us say, a station into the South Polar circle. She had been commissioned only nine months before, but a great reformer having come into power at Whitehall, she had been decreed obsolete, and peremptorily ordered home. That may not, at a first glance, be deemed a hardship for those concerned. But it was an inconvenience of no small order. For the ward-room had been equipped at the expense of the members of the mess on the understanding of a three years' commission. They would now have to sell out their stores and furniture at a considerable loss. One or two had made arrangements of a domestic character,—such as the leasing of

houses for wives,—which had to be suddenly cancelled, also at some pecuniary loss. All were, as they put it, "out of a job." And no one was particularly pleased or contented with the sudden upsetting of his particular "apple cart." All felt extremely justified in comprehensive grumbling. Hearing all the expressed discontent, annoyance, and wrath of the mess, and knowing that the root-and-branch reformer who had just begun to make his influence felt at the Admiralty was the agreed-on cause of it all, one ventured to remark, using the pet name of the navy for the great man, "I suppose you blame Jacky for all this?" But there came a chorus of dissent—"Oh no—Jacky's all right. Quite the right thing to do, you know—but an awful bore for us."

Now this impressed the writer, for he had often heard the army subaltern's expressed opinion of the inconvenient methods of another great root-and-branch reformer, and he never heard him even grudgingly admit that "'K' was all right," when the undertakings of the latter had run counter to his convenience. It seemed somehow to express the spirit of the navy—the welfare of the service before all—that ready admission in spite of everything, and in the face of all personal discontent, that "Jacky" was to be relied upon.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE LONG SHIPS

THEY that go down to the sea in ships know all about them—but they are chary of telling. It may be that, being bred to the sea from his youth upwards, your seaman hardly realises that his ways of dealing with it, and its ways of dealing with him, are of any great interest to such as seek their bread ashore. It is rarely that any man sees romance in his own occupation. The usual farmer dislikes the aspect of red poppies in his cornfield. The journalist seldom lingers to contemplate the wonders incidental to the printing of his paper. The actor, the barrister, the crossing-sweeper, the policeman, the merchant—if they find anything at all romantic in life, find it outside their own environment. Even the little boys who sell newspapers, or blacken boots, do not perceive it in the marvellous life of the streets that ebbs and flows about them. They turn to the Western Prairie, and study it in the deeds

and exploits of the gentlemen who slay redskins and "hold up" mining camps,—as set forth in the enthralling literature devoted to such subjects. The varied human contents of an omnibus provide them with no food for reflection whatsoever.

It is so nearly always. Men who do the most interesting things imaginable seldom pause to consider what extraordinary deeds theirs are. If they have time to do so, they wonder how on earth it is that the other fellow manages to perform his miracles. Their own—well, any fool could do them.

And so it is with a junior naval officer who shows you a great dockyard,—such, for instance, as Portsmouth. He is delighted to tell you about anything you may specifically inquire as to. He will go to great pains in instructing you concerning things which are painfully familiar to him. He will not be impatient with your ignorance, nor will he take advantage of your innocence. But he seldom understands why you should be interested in affairs which are as plain as A B C, and as common to him as the habit of taking breakfast. And so, understanding this, you do not bore him overmuch with too minute and too persistent interrogation, but accompany him about, merely determined to see what you can for yourself,

and to comprehend so much of it as your limitations will permit. And, after all, perhaps you are as wise in nautical affairs at the end as if you had packed your brain with information that was Dutch to you.

If you have ever spent an afternoon conscientiously endeavouring to assimilate the contents of a large picture gallery within a given time, you will understand the mental indigestion consequent upon a first day in Portsmouth dockyards. There remains with you a curious collection of heterogeneous impressions. Battleships of yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow are crowded together in your mind with line-of-battle ships of Nelson's day. Semi-obsolete cruisers are tied up to the piers of your memory with up-to-date efficients like the *Spartiate* or the *Terrible*. Many breeds of torpedo-boats and torpedo-boat destroyers float alongside uncanny groups of submarines. Royal yachts jostle weird and monstrous coal transporters. It is the strangest medley of impressions that one may carry—outside lunacy or delirium tremens. Many weeks would not give you time to see the dockyards and their wonderful contents thoroughly enough to enable you to understand them by half. It would take many years to acquire a perfect realisation of the meaning of the things seen. With luck,

a fairly communicative guide, and a little of the faculty of observation, you may be fortunate enough to dimly remember the main features of a few of the latter day miracles which you have passed by all too hurriedly. But only a few. The rest will remain with you as part of a general recollection of a wandering through Wonderland.

In the first place are the battleships—enormous floating castles of dull grey, grimly and fearfully business-like. They are not so pretty as the cruisers, being less like ships than forts—squat and ugly and entirely given over, apparently, to the display of brute force. A battleship is like a pug-nosed prize-fighter, a cruiser more suggestive of the lithe sprinter who knows how to use his hands.

"This," said the little gentleman in the blue coat with the brass-bound sleeves, who was mainly bent on getting back to a comfortable ward-room in as short a time as was consistent with an offer to show one over the yard, "This is the *Canopus*. Tight little craft, isn't she?"

Being armed with the necessary authority to do so, we went aboard the empty battleship, climbing up a steep gangway from the dock side. One had the sensation of entering a deserted town. Everywhere was silence. Along the wide decks sounded no hurrying patter of

bare feet. No whistles piped. No curt orders sent a strenuous population to do this or that. Bridge and quarter-deck were uninhabited. The obtrusive giants in the turrets for'ard and aft cocked their grey, stoppered noses into the rain and seemed to be asleep. The massive conning-tower was a thick-walled burial vault wherein was a little museum of telephones, speaking tubes, and brass-bound electrical appliances. The tiny wheel which controls the steering of the great ship in action seemed to join in the solemn slumber of the great guns below the tower. In the six-inch casemates there was darkness, and one could have sworn that the twilight of the lower decks was ghost-ridden. A deserted ship of any kind is melancholy, but an empty battleship is funereal.

"Let's get out of this," said Bluewater, as he led the way over the side again. "Beastly things, empty ships! Can't stand 'em!" And so, regretfully, we left her half unseen. Mild protest availed not.

"Oh, well—you know, she is not very wonderful. Quite an old ship. She was built in 'ninety-seven. Oh yes, fair size—nearly thirteen thousand. Speed? About eighteen. About twelve-inch armour, I think; all that class—*Glory*, *Vengeance*, *Goliath*—are twelve-inchers. But she's simply nothing to the

Britannia—that new battleship building over there. She's eighteen thousand, and has fourteen-inch armour."

Nevertheless, — as we board another ship which is inhabited, and has a hospitable ward-room, where plenty of valuable time is wasted interestingly in talk of the wider world down Channel—one looks back across the pier to the *Canopus* with wholesome respect and awe. She gives you the impression, to put it colloquially, of being the possessor of "a dirty left."

We had to stand in the driving rain afterwards to let the *Terrible* go through a lock-gate, over which led our way. She was being warped round from dry dock into a berth in one of the basins, and only made way for us at her leisure. But it was worth while to shiver in the wet for a space studying her, as her great bulk slid slowly by. Having no coal in her bunkers, her steep sides towered high out of the water, and she seemed a very big ship indeed. She is larger than the *Canopus* by some two thousand tons, but as you stand at her side, and crick your neck gazing upwards to the bridge, she looks as if she could carry the battleship on her upper deck. But to do battleships justice, there is a vast amount of them under water—such an amount as you may only fully realise when you see one of

them in a graving dock. The *Canopus* and the *Terrible*—but how may one particularise when there are so many?

Destroyers and lean kangaroo-dogs of torpedo-boats abound everywhere. There is something devilish in their appearance. The black paint makes them look three times as venomous and wicked as they would seem if their colour were the grey of the larger ships.

But in all the vast arsenal of wholesale death there are no engines so ominously suggestive of destruction as the submarines. In one corner there are three of them floating side by side—for all the world like three great dynamited fish. The wavelets in the basin lap over their curved backs, and their deadly noses are submerged. The lids of the conning-towers stand open, and men enter and emerge from the little round hatchways. You would like to go aboard one of them?

"Yes," answers your cicerone politely—"Yes? And after that what would you like—the moon?"

It seems that no man, save those who have to do with them, may explore their mysterious depths. "Oh, well," you say, "I suppose, after all, they are very stuffy and disagreeable."

There are ancient paddle-wheel gunboats and obsolete sloops, long disused, and only

biding their time until they pass into the hands of the ship-breaker. There is the old *Victoria and Albert* close to the new Admiralty yacht *Enchantress*; and not far away is the present royal yacht, the *Osborne*. At one quay side is moored the towering old three-decker *Asia*, now used as a depôt ship, and contrasting strangely with her many gunned and many funnelled successors in the vicinity. Opposite to her is a "has-been" of a later date—and yet just as hopelessly a "has-been" as she is—the battleship *Sultan*. The ponderous rifled muzzle-loaders in her 'tween decks, with their stout-bottle lines, did good service at Alexandria in '82, and she was a crack ship in her time—the time of the earlier ironclads,—but now is altogether obsolete. The dockyard is a scrap-book of naval reminiscences. Coming round a corner suddenly you would not be in the slightest degree astonished if you were to behold Admiral Noah's flagship floating in a basin—so archaic, even to a landsman, are some of the types of craft that have found haven here beside the newest of the new.

It is all wonderful, all tremendously interesting. As one has said, it is impossible to adequately realise this huge naval arsenal in a day—or in many days. But one leaves it with a sense of having learned something of what the

responsibilities of sea power are, and of having acquired a little knowledge of where the money goes. Even if so much is all you may carry away, it is something worth having acquired.

After having spent a little time in the dockyard examining, and marvelling at, the steel bulwarks which protect and insure the Empire in the dawn of the twentieth century, it may be for the good of your soul, unduly elated by what you have seen, to go to the Hard, and hire a boat, so that you may make reverential voyage back into the late eighteenth and early nineteenth, and duly marvel, also, at the wooden ones which were its protection in the making.

Out beyond the royal yacht, beyond grey gunboat, torpedo depôt, and cruiser — short, thick, dumpy, bulging to the water line, three-masted and square-rigged—swings the Old Ship at her moorings. She is the ship that symbolises all the navy ever was, and is, and is going to be—the ship whose deeds and achievements have set an undying standard for the slim greyhounds and enormous mastiffs of craft swimming past her each day. She is the ship of a fighting man—Nelson's ship, the Nation's ship, the ship of the whole Empire—the splendid, solid, brave old *Victory*. She lies out in the silver ribbon of harbour,

towering high against the low-lying Gosport shore, and swinging to the strong ebb-tide that races down towards Spithead—a heart-stirring monument to the spirit that made England, and a warning that such a spirit must never fail or flag.

Now if you come down to the Hard, and look out across the water to where the Old Ship floats, and don't experience a certain pride, and exultation, and awe—you'd better stay ashore, for you are not good enough to go aboard the *Victory*, to stand where Nelson fell, to see where he died, and to squint out along the barrels of the battered, dingy cannon that saved England a hundred years ago. For anyone who finds anything worthy in the making of the Empire not to thrill ever so little at the sight of the Old Ship, would be as if a Sydney-sider took no pride in his harbour.

As your boat shoots down under the bluff, rounded bows of the *Victory*, and swings into the foot of the ladder, it is possible to realise the immense height of the wooden walls. Her freeboard is enormous, and the most curious and characteristic feature of her architecture is the great "tumble home" of her sides. As she floats now, she is higher out of the water, and even deeper, than any modern warship. This

reads curiously, but it is said to have been proved on one occasion not very long ago, when she was accidentally rammed by a cruiser, and it was found that the lines of hose with which the pumping vessels are equipped—designed for use on the latest of the new ships—were not long enough to go up over her sides and down into her lowest depths.

Leaving your ancient ferryman to tie his boat up at the foot of the ladder, you go up through the wide port which opens on to the main deck, and go into the Past. The metallic clang of the dockyards is one hundred years behind you; you have stepped across a grating into wonderful bygone years.

First you ascend to the quarter-deck above. And here, as you come out in front of the high poop, you want to stand still, and take your hat off, and be let alone. For you are gazing at the place where the great little lion-souled man was struck down a century ago.

A simple brass plate on a raised block of wood marks the spot more eloquently than all the epitaphs in St. Paul's. "Here Nelson fell." Could anything be better, or grander, or more stirring? You don't want more than that. Another word—date, description, or anything—would spoil it. Its very simplicity is its beauty. Whoever was responsible for

that inscription was a man of taste, and his good deeds live after him.

"Here Nelson fell." You look for'ard along the patched old decks,—scrubbed and cleaned and almost empty,—and all who go about them disappear. They become filled with the din and smoke of that far away October the 21st; the tall spars strain under the swelling, shot-torn canvas; a hurrying, cursing, sweating, fighting crew works the line of guns on either side; dead and wounded clog the littered planking — and there by the companionway lies the grey-faced admiral, supported lovingly by the men who love him, whom he has led to this splendid finish. The gold tassels of one epaulette are torn (you have seen it for yourself at Greenwich); the white waistcoat has been hastily opened; there is blood on the deck. "When Lord Nelson was shot, and was yet in the arms of the men who was (*sic*) supporting him, his eye caught the tiller rope, which was unusually slack, and he exclaimed with much emphasis, 'Tighten that rope there!' An eminent proof that his professional ardour still survived the brilliancy of life" (*The Times*, November 7, 1805). You see them carry him down the ladder; you see the anxious, solicitous faces looking hurriedly round from the deadly work they are most intent on; you see

—you hear the confounded Cockney corporal of Marines, who persecutes you as a guide, saying, in his accursed fashion—

"This plyte marks th' sport w'ere Lord Vis-count 'Oratio Nelson was struck down be a bullet fired from th' torps of the *Redoutable*, with w'ich ship the *Vict'ry* was closely hengyged. 'E was at once carried below, an' died in th' corkpit soon hafter. Hi shall show you the corkpit direckly. There was a hold lydy come aboard 'ere once, an' sees th' plyte—''Ere Nelson fell'—so she looks darn th' 'atchwy an' sez, 'Pore feller!' she sez, 'I don't wonder hat it!'" May that lance-corporal sink in the Great Deep!

The 'tween decks are extraordinarily low and dark; a six-foot man cannot walk erect in them, but must continually dodge and duck to avoid the massive beams. In the gun-room—which instantly calls to mind Mr. Midshipman Easy—it is difficult to realise how anyone ever did anything else than sit upon a chest.

What strikes one most as to the internal structure of the *Victory* is the very obvious strength of it. The great deck beams and the massive ribs are nearer eighteen inches than twelve in depth. Where there are open ports it is possible to realise the thickness of her sides. Such ships were well named "the

wooden walls of England." Few modern walls are as thick as the *Victory's* sides. Although she is nearly 130 years old, she is still as sound as a bell—though, of course, she has undergone extensive repairs from time to time. The only deck planking which actually saw Trafalgar is the orlop, and it is a veritable patchwork pattern. But the frame of the ship remains. After the collision which has been referred to it was necessary to put her into dry dock, when it was found that the old timbers of her skeleton were as sound and staunch as on the day she was launched. They built to last in those days.

The cockpit is a gloomy, low-roofed place, far below the water-line—stuffy, tarry, and evil-smelling. Above the gruesome surgeon's table amidships, and behind the butt of the mainmast, hangs a dim horn lantern—all the light they had for amputations at Trafalgar. And there were no anæsthetics. We are delicately-minded in these days, and require tiled walls and sterilised bandages when we desire to be pruned of a limb, but many a leg was sawn off on this old table during the great battle, sewn up, and the stump dipped in tar. However, these are details.

There is a little space at the side of the deck, between two of the mighty ribs, which has

been roped off. On the planking, between the whitewashed beams, lies a laurel wreath. On the curving side of the ship is another inscription as tersely and simply beautiful as the one on the quarter-deck.

What is to be said here? What words may one speak in such a shrine as this? How may he labour to voice the reverence, the awe, the pride of race which thrill him as he looks between the massive timbers at the white deck where died a Man? There is nothing to be said. The simple words express it all, sum up the holiness of the place, and suffice for the thought that fills the mind to overflowing—"*Here Nelson Died.*"

CHAPTER XIV

THE DEATH SHOP

THE soldiers and the sailors are very fine fellows. It is not altogether the fault of the former that they do not seem to be quite such fine fellows as the latter. They ought to, if they were only given an equal chance. It seems to be rather the fault of the people who employ them, at a cheap rate, to play with in peace time, and to do the work for them in war time that they ought to be willing to do for themselves. You have had a look at them from outside, and have seen as much of them as one knows how to point out to you—which isn't very much, but which the writer hopes is fairly enough presented. Both soldiers and sailors are too diverse and varied to take otherwise than in the mass, and if one has made comparisons between the two masses—well, it was more or less inevitable. You couldn't help doing it yourself, if you went first hand to see them.

There is a place not far from London where you may go and see for yourself the making of the tools with which England equips both Tommy Atkins and Jack Tar for the defence of her shores at home and abroad. It is rather a grim place, and although it possesses an interest of a kind that can hardly fail to fascinate you, the result of seeing it may possibly be a little depressing. In these days we like to keep disagreeable realities behind us, and the making of implements wherewith we may destroy one another is scarcely compatible with the refined kind of civilisation which we like to assure ourselves is ours to enjoy. When you have been to the place in question, and have looked about you, and have taken into your understanding so much as you may of it, you will hardly fail to realise that in its suggestions it is, to say the least, a little gruesome. But there is about it such a wonderful display of ingenuity and cunning that you cannot but feel glad you have gone to see it, and if the ultimate objects of its existence are not cheerful, they are at any rate arrived at through processes which are in themselves admirable. It may be, of course, that you take a sanely barbaric pleasure in observing the preparation of the means whereby someone else preserves the inviolability of your hearth and home. In

that case you will really enjoy what you may see in this place, and will come away with a comforting sense of security rather than an unhappy realisation that you have seen something not much better than the preparation of flints for his arrow-heads by a prehistoric ancestor. Whatever the point of view, however, you will be greatly impressed, and not a little instructed.

You take train from Cannon Street, which is due east, beyond St. Paul's, and, by and by, after passing through the sordid lower river outskirts of London, you come to a grimy station labelled Woolwich Arsenal. Here you get out of the train, and inquire of Thomas Atkins, of the Artillery, the way to the Arsenal. When he has pointed out the road, you wend your way by one or two narrow streets to a great brick gateway, guarded by policemen, to whom you deliver up the little ticket from the War Office, which vouches for you as a British subject. And then you are in the Death Shop.

You are in the place where they concentrate death, pack it up into all sorts of shapes and sizes of pills, and export it to the ends of the earth, there to be distributed for the glory of England and the physicking of her enemies. Before you shall have finally departed in the twilight you will realise how many forms the

violent variety of death may take. You will come away wondering whether man's proper study is, not so much man, as the means of obliterating and exterminating him. You will be sick with the ingenuity of his schemes of murder. You will be no less impressed by man's exceeding cleverness than by his diabolical homicidal tendencies.

There are so many ways, so many abrupt and terrible ways, by which death may be administered to our friend the enemy—and you review them so rapidly in a short afternoon at the great Arsenal—that you return to London with only a hazy and confused grasp of all that you have seen. But some things remain with you as distinct and tangible recollections, as to the significance of which you may not blind yourself, and of which you will remember a great deal. You will reckon Woolwich Arsenal amongst those things seen which have impressed you.

There is a guide—a little, thin, unhealthy man with a hacking cough and only a finger and a thumb upon his right hand—who takes you through the workshops. He has been in the Horse, the Field, and the Garrison Artillery, and, after that, in the workshops, where marvellous sawing, planing, and dovetailing machinery—to some little extent humanly

directed—manufactures gun carriages, wheels, ammunition boxes, and limbers. When you come to the department which he graced until a circular saw expeditiously amputated three of his fingers, he will delay you overlong with loving explanation of the working of his pets. He is a very clever little man, and, except when he indulges in a parrot-like recital of facts appertaining to "muzzle-velocity," "calibre," and "foot-pounds," exceptionally lucid and interesting. He knows intimately the processes which he has to show you, and is poetically enthusiastic over them; but when he remembers the stock of great technical knowledge that is his and becomes an unintelligible oracle to the layman, he also becomes something of a trial and an affliction. In all other respects he is a guide, philosopher, and friend.

He leads you first of all into a place where pallid and very earnest men, and boys in great number, are standing by and directing sapient and almost sentient machinery in the making of percussion fuses for shell. The vast room is a forest of driving-belts. Everywhere there is the flash and rush of rapid motion. Everywhere there is the buzz and whirr of tools that cut metal. Everywhere keen, pallid youths and men intent upon their tasks. Everywhere the same punching, cutting, and turning of the

brass fuses to be screwed into the noses of the deadly pounds and hundredweights of metal which presently you shall behold in the making.

The machines are automatic. Leather bands from spinning shafts overhead feed them with energy, and one man controls six, eight, or ten of them, according to his capacity. There are hundreds of these busy machines spread about the acre and a half of floor space included in this particular department. And they are all working at, all turning out—fuses, fuses, fuses! Individually they are marvellous. You have seen the linotype, perhaps? or the loom? or the calculating machine? Well, here you have the equally endowed brother of them all. The precision, the speed, the millionth-of-an-inch accuracy of the most complicated machinery is here. The solid brass cylinder is cut from a rod and adjusted. With no loss of time it is bored, its screw threads are turned on it, its parts fashioned and adjusted and pared to a pattern—the completed article turned out as you watch, or, if not quite ready for its part in death's scheme, prepared for the next miraculous machine which is to add another stage to the sum of its completeness. The guide dances about explaining mysteries in his raucous, one-lung-power voice; and you gaze, and wonder, and grow confused—until you remember that a

grim foreman sits over all, and directs, and drives, and supervises. And his name is Death!

From the making of fuses for huge shells you pass on to the making of bullets. Now there are not many bush-bred Australians who have not sat over a fire with a ladle, wherein was melted tea-chest lead to be poured into little pincer-like moulds which, at the right time, would part in the middle and let drop shiny new bullets for the refilling of brass cartridges, and the ultimate destruction of kangaroo and wallaby. And it was a pretty and expeditious little operation, and one that made you think you were rather a clever fellow. Why, you could reload as many as fifty cartridges in an evening! Here, in a day, they make so many hundred thousand complicated death-pills that, if I were to tell you the exact number, it would cause you to regard me much in the same way as an Englishman does when I tell him stories of rabbits in Australia. Each .303 bullet goes through nearly a score of machines, and there is a long table surrounded by little boys preparing the leaden cores for pressing into the nickel coats, who each handle tens of thousands of them in the day's work. There is quite a crowd of the small, industrious boys, so you may imagine how many bullets

are turned over to the safety sheds, where they are pressed into the brass cordite-filled shells to form the complete rifle cartridge. We may not see this latter process, because it is dangerous, and the kind War Office will not permit us to risk our valuable lives out of mere curiosity. But of the making of bullets we may take our fill. And when you consider that each of the bright little objects, whose life-history is so fascinating, only fulfils its destiny by killing or crippling a being like yourself, the contemplation of the process of their creation is very entertaining.

In the first place are machines which punch round holes in long strips of nickel ceaselessly winding into them. Each piece so punched out emerges from the machine as a hollow cylinder open at one end—almost half an inch in diameter and a shade more than that in depth. The next machine makes the cylinder a little narrower and a little longer. The next, and the next repeat the operation—the cylinder always growing narrower and longer, until it is slightly longer than the .303 bullet as you know it in the cartridge. Another machine then presses the closed end into the conical shape of the complete bullet. In yet another it is bored out to the requisite calibre of the leaden core which is to be fitted into it. Finally, the open

end is trimmed off a little until the shell is almost, but not quite, of its proper shortness. The nickel outer coating is now quite ready for its leaden interior. They do not pour the lead into the nickel as you would suppose. It has already been through a process of evolution of its own, and actually fits into its overcoat. Each nickel cone is filled by machinery, the overlapping ends of the nickel pressed down round the base of the lead, the broad arrow and the Arsenal mark stamped on its lower end, the groove which the brass cartridge grips turned on the outside of the bullet—and there you have the smallest, but, on the whole, the most effective arbiter of battle which Woolwich turns out.

There is so much to see, so little time to see it, and so little space here to describe it in detail, that only the merest passing mention may be made of most of it. There is the model room of projectiles, where you may trace the evolution of "common," "shrapnel," "case," "solid," and other discomforting species of missiles, from the spherical Crimean period to the conical forms of the present day. You may look from the old wooden fuse of the round shell that harried Sebastopol to the complicated mechanism and wonderful simplicity of the deadly contrivances by means of which we keep

the peace to-day. From chain-shot and bar-shot, designed to cut hempen rigging and bring down masts and sails, you may turn to the enormous armour-piercing shells made to reach the vital parts of the modern battleship. You may contrast the primitive "flare-shell"—as troublesome to those firing it as those fired at—with the electric search-light, its successor of to-day. In short, you may briefly read in this page of the history of warfare a wonderful and appalling account of the progress which the old-established firm of Death, Mutilation, & Co. have made in their business. The ease with which it can oblige its customers to-day speaks volumes for the completeness of its development.

Then you may go to a place of buzzing saws, sawdust, and shavings, where wood of good quality and timber of exceeding soundness is hewed, and carved, and planed into all the shapes that go to make ammunition boxes, shell cases, gun wheels, limbers, stretchers, tent-poles, mallets, pegs—everything wooden which an army in the field may require. (The wooden heads which have so often figured conspicuously in our campaigns are made in Pall Mall.) This is where, amongst other things, are completed those wonderfully sound and well-constructed ammunition boxes with

the little rope handles at each end. And, as elsewhere, nearly all is done by machinery, sparingly controlled by man, and supervised wholly by the sad, stern foreman who watches grimly over the whole great shop.

Where they cast shells and armour-piercing projectiles from huge vats of molten iron and steel, you will see half-clad devils toiling strenuously in weird and lurid lights. You will perceive men of muscle and sinew doing strong-man feats with masses of solid metal, as they take them from great grindstones to mighty lathes. You will marvel at the gentleness and accuracy of overgrown engines which pound and punch and push immense shapes of steel with unflagging energy. In one place you will, like Agag, walk delicately between white-hot pits which look like the sky-lights of hell. And in the huge, gloomy forge where the mighty hammers beat the largest and solidest parts of ordnance, and the thickest armour plates, into their predestined shapes, you will hold your breath in silent, awe-stricken contemplation of the great tools which can hit with the force of eighty tons falling many feet, or drive a carpet tack as gently as the lightest hammer in a woman's hands.

There is a story here of how the Shah of Persia put his watch on the anvil beneath one

of the giants, and how the ponderous hammer was brought down so lightly as to touch its case without crushing it. So pleased was the Shah that he presented the watch to the man at the lever. "An'," says your mentor, "the juggins wouldn't part with it on no account."

"Would you?" you ask him.

"Would I h——l!" he replies, in the peculiar idiom of Atkins—meaning to convey thereby that he would have most speedily realised upon it, if he but had had the chance.

Last of all, you come to the place where they make and mend great guns. It is a play-room of giants. High overhead vast electric cranes run to and fro. All about are enormous firearms—some being bored and rifled; some being turned on great lathes; some having new breech-blocks fitted; some being tailored, as it were, for mountings and carriages; some in the very genesis of their existence. One of these latter you stand and watch. It is a huge naval gun—a monster of such seeming unwieldiness that you wonder how it may ever be elevated or depressed, or swept round arcs of the horizon. It is over thirty feet long, and its bulk is enormous. It consists of the inner tube, which is rifled; of another which is shrunk on to the first; and, at the stage of construction in which you find it, it is having

more than one hundred and fifty miles of flat steel wire wrapped round it in layers. It turns upon a lathe, and winds the wire off a drum at a strain of fifty tons—one very old, very wise, and very highly paid workman skilfully adjusting it as it coils itself in layers about the inner tubes. Over the wire, when it is all on, will be shrunk the massive "jacket" which is the outer garment of the gun. "Hits projectile," orates the guide, "weighs near eight 'undred pounds, an' hits firin' charge is twelve 'undred pounds." You may not be quite sure of these figures, but they lose their relative importance when you look into the breech of a completed weapon of the same class, and find that the space which contains missile and charge exceeds eight feet in length, and that you might almost get in yourself and lie hidden. Of a truth a gun is a god, mighty and terrible.

But it grows dark, and the workshops are emptying themselves. You pass out hurriedly through a hospital for sick cannon, in which are ailing and convalescent weapons of many sorts. There is just time for a hasty glance at the new Royal Horse Artillery gun, which has little of the conventional shape of a cannon —being girt about with recoil cylinders, which make it very ugly but very business-like. It

can fire fifteen shells a minute, and, if you can imagine yourself its target, it is easy to realise that intervals of only four seconds between rounds must indeed render it what the guide announces it proudly and lovingly to be—"a reg'lar bloomin' knock-hout." And so with the recollection of this pretty instrument of slaughter, the latest of many recollections of its fearful stock, you leave the Death Shop—perhaps a little saddened by all that you have seen.

CHAPTER XV

THE PORT

LONDON is Number One, and Liverpool is Number Two, and between Number Two and Number One there is a gulf of centuries. London is old—old and conservative. Liverpool is new—as far as anything in England may be new,—and intensely liberal and progressive. London grudgingly and slowly adapts herself to the requirements of a modern great city. Liverpool strains every nerve to be up-to-date, to have the latest and the best of everything, to ensure that all her services are efficient and sufficient. London——

But you cannot compare the two cities satisfactorily. London may only be described as being London—immense, unwieldy, all-devouring, Number One of the United Kingdom and the world. And her ways are her own peculiar ways, which never could be applied elsewhere, and never would be. As has been said before, her people are a tribe apart from the rest of

England and the world. It is really as distinctive to be a Londoner as to be a Jew, or a Fijian. It would be easier to compare Liverpool with Sydney, or Melbourne, or Marseilles, than with London. So we won't compare Liverpool with anything, but just take a glance at her, and the surprising great and rich city that she is.

With one thing more than with any other is the outlander coming to Liverpool struck most forcibly—the modernness and up-to-dateness of the city. It is a city of hustlers, a great mercantile community. As the term is generally understood, there is no leisured class in Liverpool. Of merchant princes there are not a few, but they seem, as a rule, if not still actively engaged in business, to be of that class which finds absorbing interest in municipal affairs, and in the improvement and adornment of its city, and in devising plans for the betterment, and even the entertainment, of its fellow-citizens.

The Australian reader will best understand one's meaning when one explains that Liverpool rejoices in the possession of more than an average number of sons whom we in Australia speak respectfully of as "good townsmen." The phrase covers a wide meaning, for where a city has possessed throughout its history

many good townsmen, it becomes rich in all that makes a city habitable. Everywhere in Liverpool the good townsman has left his mark. In gardens, parks, art galleries, libraries, statuary—above all, in the control of public works—do you see evidence of the manner in which he has been, and is, shaping the city's destinies, and seeing to her welfare. It is likely that few other cities in the world have had so much done for them in this respect as has Liverpool—from the days when her merchants amassed wealth in the slave trade to these of grain and cotton. The strenuousness, energy, earnestness, and all-pervading public spirit which are so apparent seem rather to characterise the place as American than English. But it is English, English to the core—only the very best development of that vital and sustaining power in England, the middle class.

There are many fine features of the city over which one might linger indefinitely with the pleasure which comes from the contemplation of things well done, but if you wish to arrive at the source and soul of all you may see, go to the docks.

The docks are to Liverpool what the heart is to the human body. They send the life-blood circulating through it. Block the en-

trance to the Mersey, and the town goes back centuries. Send the great ships which come from all the world elsewhere, and Liverpool is nothing more than the terminus of railways, and perhaps an agricultural centre of not overmuch importance. It is true that all roads lead to London. But it is equally true that most of the salt sea tracks come to terminate in the docks of the Mersey, either as trunk roads or branch highways.

They are immense. No other word can describe them, or the multitude of interests which they represent. And in them he who runs may read from that great book "The Wide World." There can be no other place, surely, where one may better realise the vastness of England's sea traffic. In and about them is the man from everywhere, and the huge variety of goods and chattels which he brings with him, and his strangely blended lingo, and his outlandish habits and ideas. Any seaport, or quay, or dock has something inspiring in its atmosphere, some breezy suggestion of wideness, some word of the outer seas,—but Liverpool more than most. Its docks are so cosmopolitan in population that a stranger thinks first and last of the Tower of Babel—not a babel of chaos and incompleteness, but in its aspect of many-tongued

humanity. All things are ordered and arranged, and smooth-working, and all the varied craft from all the seas obey the law, which is, briefly: "A place for everything, and everything in its place. Come in quietly, unload, clear out, and come again." The *Majestic* and the *Campania* are just as subject to it as the timber-laden wind-jammer from the Baltic, the banana-bringer from the West Indies, the copra-carrier from the Pacific, or the grain tank from the River Plate. Cotton, wheat, maize, mahogany, tobacco—each and every raw product from far-off lands has its appointed place, and lands never-endingly in decent and proper orderliness.

But the greatest things in the docks are the great ships. More than anything else do they seem to stand for England, for all that England has aspired to and attained during the centuries her trade has been developing. In one of them the writer had the good fortune to see that giant the *Oceanic*, and although she is not quite the largest of the giants that rests themselves here during the short intervals that come between their spells of labour, she is fairly representative of them all. Somehow, at first, as you gaze at her from the farther side of the basin wherein she is berthed, her vast size does not strike you. Her lines are so graceful and

symmetrical that her dimensions are not at once apparent. It is only when you begin to notice the insects crawling in and out of her, that her true proportions impress themselves upon the understanding. And the insects are hurrying men as high and as heavy as yourself. She towers above the quay, and yet she is drawing nearly thirty feet at the bows. She is colossal, tremendous. How she has ever been got into this narrow land-locked basin, through the slim bottle-neck of an entrance, it is difficult to realise. And after you have looked at her from the outside, and gone over her, and seen something of the astounding business of her provisioning and coaling and loading, you begin to think of devising a new coat-of-arms for Liverpool, to supersede the queer bird with the seaweed in its beak that does duty at present. It will be a great ship, rampant, over an illimitable expanse of ocean, having for motto the chaste, expressive, and all-powerful symbol £. It might well sum up the power of the great port.

If you stand over at Birkenhead across the Mersey at low tide, you will see great ships continuously threading a devious passage up the channel between the sandbanks. They come regularly and ceaselessly, deep laden with the goods of all the world. And they are

feeding England. For the yellow tideway down which you gaze is not merely the mouth of a great river. It is one of the huge, gaping mouths of England, and into its capacious jaws the rest of the world is never-endingly pouring a stream of golden wheat. And always, England is buying, and asks for more. Russia, America, Africa, Australia, New Zealand—all the world—feed her here, sometimes with a long spoon, sometimes with a short. And always she asks for more.

It is a great business, the feeding of England—a great business and a complicated. There are many mouths, and to realise the digestive process fully would require years of study. But a little of it you may see and understand in Liverpool—just at the moment when the spoon goes into one of the hungry mouths, and the jaws begin to work. And it is almost more than one may hope to make clear in mere writing.

First of all,—being conducted by a wise man who has influence therein, and to whom the grain trade is as an open book, in the pages of which he is not too wise to find something of the romance inseparable from great dealing,—you go to the Corn Exchange. All grain that comes to Liverpool is, comprehensively, corn. To an Australian a cornfield

is a paddockful of high rustling stalks of maize, with tasselled cobs in their husks, and, possibly, pumpkin vines about their roots. To an Englishman it is a hedge-enclosed space of yellow wheat, starred with red poppies. In the "trade," however, the term includes nearly every kind of seed. The Corn Exchange is not merely a place where you may buy and sell wheat, barley, oats, or maize. It is permissible to exhibit and sell therein millet, durra, linseed, or even mustard seed. It covers a multitude of grain. The time to go and see the Exchange is near noon, when both buyers and sellers are present in strongest force. There is a large room, with almost half an acre of floor space, all over which, in well-ordered lines, are planted black painted stands, —cross-bred between desks and high tables,— and on them, in little open sacks, are displayed many and various samples of grain, grown in various and many countries, and brought hither in a strange variety of shipping. In one little gaping sack you will find the wheat of Argentina—alluded to here as "Plate wheat"; in another Chilian; in another Siberian; in another South Australian or Victorian. As you look at that which comes from your own particular province, you will wonder whether the breezes that rustled through it when it was

first "in ear" stirred the pines about Narromine, or the she-oaks in the Hunter Valley, or whispered across the ranges down on to the wide north-western plains of New South Wales. There are yellow wheats, and brown wheats, and nearly white wheats; good wheats, and indifferent wheats, and bad wheats, and gentlemen who do business in them all. On some of the stalls are loaves of bread, which proud people exhibit as showing what may be done with the particular wheats which they have to dispose of. Of course, you don't see the flour in the mixing, the dough in the kneading, or the bread in the baking; but, for his own sake, a seller naturally refrains from damaging his reputation by displaying bread made from better wheats than he actually has for sale, and it may generally be taken that his exhibit is the "genuine and unadulterated article."

The room is full of shrewd, keen-faced men —millers, importers, speculators. Restlessly, the crowd moves between the stands, nibbles grain perpetually, and discusses the market; while the sellers stand at their desks, also chewing breadstuffs, and enlarge upon the fulness and the cleanness of their wheat. There is no auction,—excepting in the occasional case of a damaged cargo, and in such purely

speculative business as the buying and selling of "forwards." The trade between importers and millers is mainly carried on amongst the samples. A buyer sees the wheat which he thinks best suits his requirements, examines it carefully, and decides to purchase such-and-such an amount. The unit most frequently employed is 200 quarters. He is then furnished with an order to inspect the bulk of the shipment from which the sample he has seen in the Exchange has been taken. Unless he notifies its owner by eleven o'clock on the following forenoon that he has decided not to buy, the bargain is closed, and he is bound to take delivery. That a buyer rarely has reason to change his mind before the eleventh hour, speaks well for the honesty that guides the selection of samples.

Astonishing is the number of the different qualities of wheat, and to anyone unacquainted with the mysteries of the grain trade, not a little perplexing. It is difficult at first to understand how any coarse and imperfect type can command a market, when it is considered that the quality of the flour produced is to the miller as his reputation to a professional man. But the intricacies of "blending" explain the mystery. So expert is the judgment of the buyer that he is able to determine at once how the mixing of certain classes of wheat

will result after the milling process has been gone through. So he purchases quantities and qualities accordingly. To the uninitiated it is nearly as wonderful a business as wool-classing—possibly even more wonderful, since the miller relies almost wholly upon one sense—sight,—whilst the wool expert has both sight and touch to aid him in delivering judgment.

But it is in the handling of the grain in bulk that most interest will be found by the looker-on. It is one of those fairy tales of commerce of which the Australian edition is not yet quite so well illustrated as the English or the American. We have not yet reached that stage in its manipulation which treats its transference from ship's hold to storehouse as water is pumped into a tank, or mud dredged from a river-bed.

Unfortunately, it so happened that, during the particular week when the writer had opportunity of personally reading the tale, and merely because of the perversity of things, there seemed to be a momentary slackening in the landing of grain. The high seas and the narrow seas were full of ships laden to the scuppers, and in a few days the docks and the elevators would have been again in their normal state of feverish activity. A few days ago they had been "rushed" with cargoes. But just

now there was one of those inevitable pauses which occur at times in every sort of activity and work. There was, nevertheless, sufficient handling of grain in an immense warehouse hard by the Alexandra Dock to give one some idea of the "real thing." And so, being armed with the necessary permission to do so, one went to the warehouse to see how it was done.

The capacity and resources of this huge establishment may be realised from the fact that at this time, being nearly full, there were distributed through the two great blocks of buildings which it comprises some 80,000 tons of wheat. If you reduce that to truck-loads of ten tons, and divide the trucks up into trains of ordinary length, the little sum will convince you that such a bulk of grain "takes some moving." And yet, with the machinery in use here, the amount of time required to fill the storehouses is inconsiderable. The store itself is one huge machine—as much as is a harvester, a linotype, or a dredge. In it machinery does nearly everything that has to be done. Man is the brain of the establishment, and his muscle and sinew come no more into play than to such an extent as is required by attendance upon the engines which supply the motive-power, and the sweeping of the floors. It is as when one presses a button, "and we do the rest."

The dock side is overlooked by a moderately high building, containing the machinery of the elevator. (In America the whole plant is termed an elevator; here, only this particular portion of it.) Between this building and the main storehouses containing the silos are the electric railway which runs the length of the whole nine miles of Liverpool's dockyard system, and a wide street. Nevertheless, the wheat goes directly from the holds of the barges, which are being unloaded as you watch, into the silos. And this is the thusness of the process.

The actual elevators are let down into the hold of the craft that is being unloaded. Practically they consist of endless chains of buckets, of such a kind as you may see at work in harbour dredges, only, of course, with the difference in this case, that the buckets are much smaller and the chains lighter. The grain is scooped up by them, and lifted to the top of the building, where it is poured into a wide-mouthed hopper. It streams from the hopper down a pipe of about fifteen inches diameter, to a receptacle at the end of the latter, where it is weighed automatically. As soon as the receptacle is filled, a lever opens it at the bottom, and the golden cascade pours itself out onto a moving horizontal endless

band. Now, as the stream on the band is constant, it will be seen that the weighing wastes no time, and interferes in no way whatever with the continuity of the whole process. The band is some six hundred feet in length—that is to say, it conveys the wheat to a point about three hundred feet from the bottom of the tube leading down from the elevator. It passes over horizontal rollers, which prevent it from sagging, and at intervals vertical rollers slightly bend up the sides, so that the rivulet of grain is kept in the middle of the band. The band itself is almost two feet in width, and that of the wheat stream varies from a foot to fifteen inches. Thus is the wheat conveyed from the basement of the dock-side building, beneath the electric railway and the street, into the lower depths of the first of the two great storehouses.

From the first band the stream again falls into another, travelling at right angles to its previous direction, and is conveyed to the foot of a second elevator, which hoists it to the top of the building. Thence it is distributed, by a similar system of bands, all over the upper portion of the block, and into the adjoining one, so that it may run into the many silos ready for its reception. The silos are really enormous six-sided bottles of brick, lined with

zinc. There is an opening from the floor overlying them, into which lead pipes from the various distributing channels. A system of "cut-offs" at the pipe junctions renders it possible to divert the supply from one silo to another. The latter are about twice as deep as wide, and at the bottom taper down into a bottle-neck shape. The quantity of grain which each of them has capacity for is enormous, and in the event of its contents heating, it is possible to cool it by the forcing in of cold air. When it is necessary to deliver wheat from the warehouse, a trap at the bottom of the silo is opened, and again the ubiquitous bands carry it off to whatever part of the building it is to be discharged at. It is all marvellously simple, —but it is giant's work. If you have once gone to see it you will never afterwards contemplate the homely domestic loaf without a strange feeling of respect, as for one who has travelled far and had many strange adventures. "Ah, my good friend," you will say, "it took some little ingenuity to bring you down to breakfast!" You will feel that you have acquired as great a knowledge of the mystery of bread as the little London boy acquired of milk when he first saw it being obtained from a cow. And you will always associate Liverpool with bread and big ships.

CHAPTER XVI

THE WORKSHOP

WE have seen the Hub and the Port—or, at least, so much of them as we have known how to see—and of all the rest of England that is available to us, there is nothing less worth missing than the Workshop. You will find it in many places, but it is hardly possible for you to go and see them all, and so you must content yourself with one. It is as much as you will want, and when you come away from it you will wonder what you know about it, so full of strange unheard-of tools and wares has it proved to be. Like the place of the Long Ships, and the Shop of Death, you will find it not a little incomprehensible in some aspects, and not a little liable to bring on the same mental indigestion as you may have had some experience of in those same wonderlands. But you will have learned a little more of England, and grasped something more definite as to her strength and weakness. The main impression,

however, will be of her great and steadfast strength.

You might go to Birmingham, where they make the ancient armour and the cartridges; or to Sheffield, where the knives come from; or to Leeds, where the cloth is woven,—and in each see some different aspect of the Workshop. But since life is short, and there are many workshops, you might do worse than go to that one which is hard by the Port, and content yourself with what you may find therein. If you can adequately understand a tenth of what Manchester holds for you to see, you will not have made your pilgrimage for nothing. But you will be lucky if you understand so much as that.

Manchester, like London, has a diversity which only time and long acquaintance can make you properly realise. Like London, it does not force its individual aspects upon you. You must find them for yourself, if you wish to study them closely. But even the shortest acquaintance with the city of cotton brings home to you the fact that Lancashire's great factory is not all a factory. It has other things in it than machinery. It has, for instance, a wonderfully staunch and strong people of its own—almost as distinct a race as the race of the Londoner—who take an infinite pride in it,

and are endlessly bent upon its advancement and its improvement. And it is a race which even the slightest knowledge of gives reason for respect and esteem. But it is not to be forgotten that when you go first to see Manchester, you carry with you your inevitable prejudices—that is to say, if you have ever before been in a manufacturing town, and think you know what to expect.

In the first place, like all the others, this particular Workshop has not got a cheerful or clean aspect. Its smoke-laden gloom worthily rivals London's. The grimness that clings to wall and roof is the output of thousands of great chimney-stacks ever belching forth smoke, and soot, and yellow terrors of clinging mistiness. And there are evidences enough of squalid lives in squalid surroundings, and of the sad contrasts between great wealth and great poverty, and of the stunted, hopeless life of slum and alley. On the surface it almost seems as though the atmosphere colours everything the same dreary tint—that there is nothing whatever to relieve the depressing fact that a workshop must necessarily be dowered only with a commonplace beauty of its own—if it can be called "beauty"—that is dull, and monotonous, and uninspiring to a degree. The people at first sight seem to be divided into

two classes, one of which strenuously exerts itself to amass great riches, and the other as strenuously to keep alive. The cares of wealth and the cares of poverty seem to be wholly absorbing. There does not appear to be time for much beside.

But it is the old story of the "ring-barked trees" in Devonshire,—the hasty jumping at a wrong conclusion. As a matter of fact, the life of the Workshop is no more dull and colourless, and altogether sordid, than that of any other great city. In some respects it is infinitely less so. Side by side with a strenuous and absorbing cultivation of the "main chance," it yet reckons largely and wholesomely with a real and unfeigned pursuit of the gentler things that ameliorate the lot of mankind. Art, and literature, and science are not left to die of neglect, even if pounds, shillings, and pence are assiduously cultivated. Little as the dull atmosphere, or the hurrying crowds in the dingy streets, or the swarming gates of a cotton mill at the day's end seem to suggest it, this particular workshop is eminently given to the pursuit of a culture that counts enormously in making for the soundness of its common life. As it is with Liverpool, so in Manchester the "good townsman" has left his mark, and continually keeps on making fresh ones. He has

taken care that even if his city be mainly devoted to the acquisition of wealth, it may at any rate be afforded many and rich opportunities of enjoying the refinements of civilisation. And if evidence is required to prove that the gloom of the atmosphere does not really cover the lives of its people, one might turn profitably enough to the pages of its principal daily newspaper. A newspaper is a good barometer of the intellectual status of its readers, and since one of the best in England is published in Manchester, that fact alone speaks more eloquently than anything else as to there being something more in the workshop than the buzz of wealth-making machinery, and the feverish grinding of the money mills.

But in spite of the fact that there is more sunshine in the life of the Workshop than at first appears to an outlander, there is, nevertheless, a very strong and abiding impression of the contrast between the riches and the poverties. It might be possible to say, truthfully, that it is even more marked than it is in London. The poor are generally more visible. By this is meant that it is hardly necessary to make especial pilgrimage to discover them. In London one might quite successfully remain oblivious to the fact that a very great depth of poverty really existed. There is not much to

be seen of it in certain West End districts. But, in the Workshop, classes are less centralised, and rich and poor rub elbows to a much greater extent than is the case in the Hub. In the best parts of Manchester one is never permitted to lose sight of the fact that one is in the midst of a nation of toilers. You might do so in Park Lane. The Manchester Piccadilly does not let the local Dives forget so readily the existence of Lazarus as does its namesake in London. Everywhere is the mill hand, male and female, and everywhere also such unfortunates as, by accident or for any other reason, have been thrown out of the way of earning a living in the mills. It is not to say that one might suppose the poor of Manchester to be more numerous proportionately than the poor of London; but in both the large cities of Lancashire they are more strikingly obvious than in the Metropolis.

In his own way the Lancashire mill hand is a very fine fellow. He has an honest appreciation of his own value, and a sense of personal independence which is too often strikingly absent from the character of the British workman. He "has a way with him" that distinguishes him greatly from those of his own class whom one has become more accustomed to in London and the south of England. He will not touch his

hat to you if you happen to wear a better one than his. He will very rarely honour even his employer with a "Sir" when he addresses him. He is blunt and rough, and says quite plainly what he thinks; but no one can be struck otherwise than by the fact that he is usually an excellent type of manhood. His very directness, and contempt for any manifestation of servility, are the virtues which one admires in him most—perhaps because they first impress themselves upon one. But his kindness and his genial shrewdness are no less noticeable. His womenkind are usually comely enough, but the atmosphere of the mills does not make for pretty complexions; and in the streets of Oldham, for instance, there is possibly more pallor in the faces of women and girls than in those of many of the working-men's suburbs lying about London.

But the heart of the Workshop lies in the great mills. There you see Lancashire as it is, and its people as they are. In amongst the nameless and mystifying machinery which makes thin thread out of fluff, in ways too complex and intricate for an outlander to follow, is the life of the place. In one of the huge establishments which lie in and all about Manchester and Oldham, you may best realise the Workshop and some little of its meaning, and

the lives of its people, and the intricacies of a great industry—so far as it is possible for you to realise them.

What hives of humming toil the mills are! How impressive the vibration of the strenuous, pulsing energy that drives each huge complicated machine, and does the most delicate work with the most fragile material! How they toil—these men and women, and boys and girls! It is a veritable inferno of industry, of unflagging watchfulness, of tireless care. It is, beside everything else, Lancashire! Whatever you may remember of Lancashire afterwards, more than anything else will the aspect of those long rooms filled full of crashing noises, the endless buzz of life, and the roar of mechanical activity, remain always with you. The pale, strong-armed girls; the hurrying little boys; the rhythmic, regular movement of the machines; the hot dry air of a fixed and unvarying temperature; the almost impalpable smell of cotton blended with the smell of machine-oil,—and past it all, through the dirty window-panes, the far-stretching vista of other great mills, and a forest of tall chimney-stacks. It is the Workshop, it is Lancashire, it is England. It is a strong rib in the skeleton of Empire.

But if the men, women, and children who

stand by the clattering machines in and about the Workshop, strike you with a sense of an excellent individuality, even more striking in this respect are the men who employ them to tend the clattering machines. One might write of them under half a dozen expressive headings, and yet not quite hit them off. "Leaders of Industry," "Knights of Commerce," "Merchant Princes,"—all the old terms of endearment such as parliamentary candidates rejoice in at election times,—and you would never altogether describe them. You might even allude to one of them as "King Cotton," and you would not be happy in your allusion. What is necessary is to find some term that will cover the exercise of great power, the building of vast fortunes, the wielding of enormous influence, and at the same time the practice of an astonishing humility. For the mill-owner amongst his own people makes a point—a surprising point in England—of a democratic homeliness such as is more than mere affectation. It is almost startling to find that a mill-hand may greet his employer by his Christian name, and that his familiarity will evoke no surprise or resentment, but rather be regarded as a perfectly natural and customary thing. Even in your own country the "Boss" usually gets a "Mister" to his surname. But it sounds

right enough here, and sounds pleasantly. It seems to symbolise a tacit admission of mutual good-feeling between employer and employee, and to stand as a sign of real strength and soundness in the life of the place—that master and man should be on such terms that they can afford to disregard the outward manifestations of discipline, whilst the necessary discipline nevertheless exists. It may not be the case that this is always so, but it looks to the outlander as if it were. The Lancashire mill-owner is a fine, broad, large-minded man—typically a public-spirited "townsman." His interests are bound up with those of his men and women. They know it, and he knows it, —and both respect it. There is a sort of "man to man" air about all classes in Lancashire that is infinitely refreshing after a contemplation of other parts of England.

Next to the great mills, almost the most interesting feature of Manchester is the fact that it is a port as well as being a workshop. The Ship Canal is one of those fairy tales of modern engineering which make the romance of modern life. Think of bringing the sea inland for thirty-five miles—and think of seeing across a peaceful, hedge-crossed, green landscape a great tramp steamer sliding through the country. Even if people who know shake

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their heads, refer you to balance-sheets, and mention the incurred liability of the municipality, when you become enthusiastic over the greatness of the scheme, you are none the less impressed by the existence of the canal. You have no room for any consideration of administrative detail in the matter. All that you can see in it is a very great and very wonderful work, which will, in the aftertime, bear witness to the existence of a rather great and wonderful spirit of enterprise once abroad in these little islands. You really care very little for the fact that up to the present it has not paid as it might have paid. All that you care for is the fact that the sea has been dragged "up country," and made to do its work thirty-five miles inland. That is almost enough for anyone who has a leaning towards the spirit of "For to Admire."

In the streets—the smoky, black, architecturally handsome, and atmospherically hideous streets of Manchester—there is endless din and traffic. Hurrying people throng them as densely as London's are thronged. The whiz of electric trams, the interminable rumble of heavy traffic, the whistle of engines, the rattle of hansom cabs,—all the chaos of noise, which lies in the heart of any great city, is here. And here, in the heart of it, is a place which you would no more expect to find than a grove of

cocoa-nut trees. It makes with the city one of the most curious and most interesting contrasts that the writer has ever come across anywhere. Imagine blossoming apple-trees in a desert, whispering palms on an iceberg, a rose garden in a foundry, water-lilies in the Thames at Greenwich — anything of the utterly incompatible—and you could not imagine anything more surprising anywhere than the discovery of Chetham's Hospital and Library in the dense, busy, turgid centre of this great Workshop. It is almost as if a little bit of grey Oxford, shorn of its greenness, had in some way got itself transferred into the vortex of a modern manufacturing city. All about is the strenuous Twentieth Century. Here in these old walls you suddenly find yourself back in the Fourteenth. It is a marvellous transformation of scene when you come out of the rushing, roaring streets into this quiet and delightful place. An old religious house, which fared as many others during the Reformation, it has for nearly two hundred and fifty years been a school for poor boys, endowed by the liberality of a former citizen of Manchester. There is hardly space to describe it in detail,—but it contains a vast variety of old-world relics, and an old-world library having chained books. One refers to it here as one of the strangest "finds" in the world

—one of those singular compensations that are everywhere to be found in England. The Temple Church near London's busy Fleet Street is just such another. The "setting" of both lend them an interest that is even apart from their antiquity. It is the interest of contrast.

Truly, the Workshop is one of the most interesting cities of England, and one which it is impossible to miss without missing some of the character of England. Apart from the cotton mills, and the great machine works, and the Ship Canal, and the people who work in it, it has a curiously indefinable individuality amongst cities. It is not like London, or Liverpool, or Melbourne, or any other place. It is like Manchester — and that best describes it.

CHAPTER XVII

THE FARM

IF one would wish to sum up the reasons for the many differences that exist between England and Australia—social, political, financial, and especially political,—it seems to the writer, that besides those which are due to time and climate, the principal might be almost reduced to two. England is a factory and a shop; Australia is a farm. It is true that we do some mining, but for the most part we are a farm—huge, understocked, undertilled, if you will,—and depend for our living upon the wheat that we grow, the mutton that we fatten, and the wool we send oversea. The strength of England is in her commerce. She cannot feed her people herself, and so she buys from the world, and traffics in the goods of the world, and has made herself very wealthy and prosperous in the process. And although the British Islands are enormously and industriously tilled, it is not the cultivation of them

that counts. It is not in Kent, or Surrey, or Norfolk, or any other county that you must seek the secret of England's wealth. It is in London, or Birmingham, or Liverpool, or Manchester. Go amongst the counties and their people to find the root-soundness of England, but look for the cause of her prosperity amongst the manufacturers and shopkeepers of her great trade centres. The shop is the thing; the farm is a side issue. But it is a wonderfully extensive side issue, and even as such, infinitely vaster and more varied than any Australian can realise in his own country. One does not recognise this in the beginning. The little kitchen-garden fields at first seem hopelessly tiny and contemptible. You hear of a large landholder who shears a thousand sheep! You are told that some shearers can shear as many as thirty or forty sheep in a day! You have been shown a large paddock that contains as many as two hundred acres! The vastness of English farming has not impressed you very much, even if its variety may have done so. But when you have been about the country a little, and seen the intensity and abundance of it, you begin to gather understanding as to its extent, and what it means to England. The shopkeeper may depend almost wholly on his shop for the wealth he amasses,

but his farm is none the less a very valuable asset.

The small perfections of an English farm strike one no less than the conservatism which often appertains to its working. For the first, the attention to minute detail cannot but impress anyone who has been accustomed to larger methods and wider margins in husbandry than are to be found in England. For the second, he is often astonished to find how tenaciously the English farmer clings to systems and implements that have long been obsolete elsewhere, and to modes of management that one has always associated with a far back past. But it is always to be remembered that one has no right, nor is it quite possible, to compare the treatment of land which may have been bearing crops for a thousand years with that of what is almost virgin soil. The practice of a rotation of crops seems strange when one hears of it first,—but wholly good and inevitable when one comes to understand the necessity for it. And there are a hundred other things that an outlander, unconsciously contrasting all he sees with what he is familiar with at home, has to become better acquainted with before he realises the meaning of.

Except in the older settled districts of Australia—such as the Hawkesbury and Hunter

Rivers in New South Wales,—most of our farming partakes of the nature of pioneering. We are still, as it were, learning to read the country and the climate. But in England the lessons of both are familiar, and have been so for many hundred years. We have trouble with our lands because nobody has occupied them before. The English have trouble because they have been so fully occupied. And so it is nearly impossible to compare the joys and sorrows of each.

Almost the best way which a stranger may learn something of English agriculture and stock-raising is by visiting one of the shows with which nearly every county in the kingdom delights itself each year. Any one will suffice, although they all differ a little from one another. The county show is one of those open pages of the book of England in which it is easiest to read her story at a glance—just as are the Park in the season and the East End in December,—one of those plainly printed leaves that impress themselves most readily on the mind of the outlander to whom most things that he sees are unfamiliar in their meanings. It may be that some account of one which the writer visited, soon after coming to England, may be of interest to the Australian reader. There are many features of them,

besides those actually connected with farming or breeding, which are instructive as to the English themselves. The one here described is perhaps of the best and most typical in England,—but for several reasons one does not say which of them it is.

It is by way of being familiar to you in some respects, and strange in others, but curiously interesting as contrasted with those one is better acquainted with. It is the parent of our Australian show—and, indeed, of all other agricultural shows in English-speaking lands—and there is some certain family likeness between mother and daughter, but how greatly they differ! Perhaps the difference is most typified by externals.

With us, a galvanised iron fence surrounds a usually more or less dusty area of land, whereon are builded sheds of wood and iron, white-posted trotting rings and tracks; here, dusky green trees and dusky green hedges enclose a few acres of bright green turf. The background of all things is green—that luxurious green which summer means in England; and if, overhead, there should happen to be the rare luxury of a blue sky, there is nothing to be found of its kind pleasanter than an English county show. Not, of course, that any loyal Australian could possibly admit this

particular show to be any better, or even, if you will have it, quite so good as the Upper Hunter, or the Dubbo, or the Southern District shows. But there are features of it of which we have no notion out at home. Like the curate's egg, "parts of it are excellent"—and that means that it is better in some features than anything of the kind elsewhere could possibly be. One may turn up one's nose at sheep that resemble fat pigs, but there can be nothing except admiration for the hunters and the shire horses. And, if it may be so written without giving offence in Australia, there is something to be said for the way these horses are handled, both over the jumps and in the ring. High treason to say it, perhaps, but the writer does not remember ever seeing anything better in Australia.

And there is a general aspect of the county shows, which one is inclined to think, would, if applied to such gatherings in Australia, be distinctly beneficial. There is no fixed show-ground. Each year the meeting is held at a different town in the county, upon land lent or leased for the purpose. Some seven or eight towns take their turn, and the system works admirably. To those who know how Gum Flat resents the fact that the district show-ground should be established at Boggy Creek,

the advantage of such a system will be at once obvious.

If you go down into this particular county (it is always "down" from London), and stand upon the crest of one of those long, rolling ridges, which make up the land thereabout, gazing out over the countryside, you will dimly realise what agriculture is in England.

The writer was taken to the highest land in the county, and told to look about. The horizon had a radius of about ten miles, and as far as one could see, with the exception of occasional clumps of timber, every inch of it had been recently ploughed, or was under crop. Over valley and ridge, level and slope, the little fields lay like a carpet of brown and green—infinitely peaceful, tidy, and beautiful to eyes used to the wild irregularities of Australian lands.

But it was too tidy, too well-ordered. Its very smoothness and regularity, and the tiny squares and oblongs which the trim hedges mapped out, suggested age. It was land that had been first tilled by man more than a thousand years ago, and it had been tilled ever since, with always increasing intensity. To-day, so exhausted has it become that you must use all manner of manures to an extent which at first seems incredible. But it is a fact, that on a great deal of English country,

if you lease a farm, you must spend double or treble the amount of the rent per acre in manuring it. That, amongst others, is one of the reasons why London continues to absorb the British rural population. A bad thing, but apparently inevitable. You cannot have your pudding and eat it.

If you take a look at the county itself, and realise some idea of the minuteness and care which is necessary in cultivating it, you will best appreciate the results which its show exhibits. It is, above all else, an exhibition of "results." In breeding and fattening and producing it shows almost, if not quite, the best that is to be done in English agricultural life. It also shows something of that wealth of England which enables so much care and money to be lavished upon farming as a hobby. There is practically no "cocky's"[1] class. The very small farmer cannot afford to exhibit, since to do so means coming into competition with exhibitors of such resources as the King and the very wealthy landowners who exist amongst the nobility. He cannot give the time necessary to the "getting up" of horses or cattle for show purposes, and has not the money to spare to pay anyone else to do it for him. The shows are, therefore, more or less

[1] "Cocky"—Australian for a small farmer.

the happy pot-hunting grounds of the landlords and the larger tenant farmers. But that, of course, in no way detracts from the interest which they possess for an outsider, or from their general usefulness.

A little, sleepy, red-lined brick town, with narrow, winding streets and quaint old inns, was the location of the show. For two days the trains poured people into the gaily decorated station, and all manner of vehicles, from ancient "growlers" to motor-cars, conveyed them to the show-ground, a mile outside.

The whole countryside was making holiday, and everywhere was laughter, and good fellowship, and keen competition. The road to the show-ground was like a busy ant track. And the people that went along it all in one direction were happy, solid-looking people, wearing on their faces that look of determination to make the most of a holiday so characteristic of the English holiday-maker. It is that thoughtful contemplation of having a good time which accounts, one believes, for the libellous assertion that the Englishman takes his pleasures sadly. He does nothing of the kind in reality. But he is absorbed in his determination to enjoy himself.

One has mentioned the nomadic nature of the country shows. A large open space

of some ten to fifteen acres was enclosed in canvas walls, which were narrowly watched from the outside by quite an army of police, in order to prevent the small boy—whose habits are the same everywhere—from evading the "gate." About half the enclosure was devoted to an exhibition of agricultural machinery, and the remainder to horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, and poultry, together with the ring in which the trials and judging took place.

Of the horses, the hunters appealed most to one. It is a class with which we are unfortunately too unfamiliar, in Australian shows, but a very strong and well-represented one here. Some twenty, or twenty-five, fine-looking animals were tried over the jumps. The latter consisted of a hurdle about four feet high, a five-barred gate, a bank with a ditch on the farther side, a wide water jump, a hedge, and a small pen constructed of hurdles which the horse had to jump in and out of—altogether a very fair test of all-round efficiency. Most of the horses failed, however, in some slight fashion or another, one only, a beautiful grey gelding, clearing everything with ease. For the most part they were excellently ridden, and there were no "points" which our jumping contests could have shown to either horses or horsemen. The shire and hackney classes

were well represented. In the former, King Edward's horses took one or two prizes.

The cattle exhibited were shorthorns, red-polled, and Jerseys. In this section, also, the King took several prizes. In the red-polled there were some splendid cattle, of which too much could not be said—were there only space to say it in. Of the pretty little Jerseys, who are aristocrats of their kind, there were not so many entries, but what there were formed a notable exhibit.

Of the sheep, one is wholly incompetent to form an opinion. They were strange beasts to an Australian—very little wool, and very much fat distributed over huge, ungainly frames, being their chief characteristics. Southdowns, Oxfords, and Suffolks were the breeds most favoured. One missed the neat and trim merino. It is possibly prejudice, but, to anyone who has become familiar with the merino, few other breeds appeal very much. And in Australia, even yet, our standard is wool, not mutton. Here it is principally the latter. If bulk of carcase counts for much, the standard reached is a high one. The King's sheep again took prizes amongst the Southdowns. His prize ram was an enormous and obese beast, nearly as large as a Jersey cow. The pigs were awe-inspiring.

Apart, however, from the exhibits, the trials, and the judging, the show had a peculiar interest to anyone from oversea. Here was England—the real England. And here were Englishmen — the real Englishmen, whose breed have made the Empire. Not in Piccadilly, or the City, or the music halls, or at Ascot, or at Brighton, or in Hyde Park on Sunday mornings, do you find the type of man who is England's real strength. You must look for him in the counties, and you will find him there—a good man and a strong, and one whose breed is not degenerate. In town, medical men will tell you, the life of the real Londoner, who does not often go away, is not, continuously, a very long one. His race seldom runs through more than three or four, or, at most, five generations. But it is different in the country. There has survived the old stamina and hardihood which made England. It is impossible not to be struck by this fact, and to any stranger who has hitherto judged Englishmen by the standard of the man he meets in London, it is more than cheering to find that he has taken too low an estimate of the strength of England.

It is not in the Londoner proper, or in the peasant class of the counties, that one finds the typical Englishman. It is amongst the small

landholders and tenant farmers. The agricultural labourer, on the whole, is not a very bright or very hopeful being, and this is not much to be wondered at when you consider his history, but the so-called "middle-class" countryman is a very good man indeed. At such gatherings as the county shows, you see him at his best. It was more than a pleasure to walk about amongst so many healthy men and women; human types as robust as their fat sheep and their huge cattle. They are conservative, they move slowly, they are difficult to rouse, often they are stupid and dull—but, they are solid. Their county, their market town, their sport (and it is good sport, as solid as themselves) suffice them. They are content with England—insular, perhaps, hopelessly narrow in their views of external affairs; indeed, often having no views at all; but in themselves they are strong, self-reliant, self-contained, and, above all, capable of taking care of themselves in their own country. It is again brought home to one that we of warmer climates, where life is quicker and changes of condition more familiar than here, too frequently regard the idiosyncrasies of the Englishman as subject for laughter. When he goes abroad, with all his ungainly "corners" still to be rubbed off, nobody is ever fond of him.

But here, what away from home are intolerantly regarded as his worst features, are truly his most sustaining virtues. His stolidity covers his solidity. If you move amongst his people in their own proper setting of county life, you learn to respect him for what he is, all round—a splendid type of manhood, certain, sure, and reliable. And there is no place more suitable for studying the real strength of personal England than at a county show.

But to leave aside the soil of the English farm, its products and its people, and to turn to its tenure, it is impossible for the most casual observer to fail to realise that something is somehow a little amiss. What it is, exactly, is not to be determined off-hand. Some people tell you that one measure of reform is the one certain remedy for all that seems anomalous and ill-adjusted in English land affairs; some tell you exactly the reverse. But one thing seems fairly certain. The lands of England are not put to their best use—if you consider that best use to be the support of Englishmen, and the sustaining of a healthy country breed. They do not do enough for England; that is to say, they are not sufficiently helpful to her in dealing with the social problems that beset her, —especially the problem of the poverty contrasting so terribly with her great wealth. And

it seems equally certain that before very long some radical change will have to be made in the present systems of land tenure, if England is still to produce good Englishmen. The feudal system had its advantages, and no doubt the way in which the large estates—into which so much English land is parcelled out—have generally been managed was a wise and effective way. But times are changing. The Englishman is abandoning the land,—or, at least, it is said so. The small farmer, whose holding is his own, is becoming a rarity. Where he still exists, he has little expectation that his sons will come after him. They have gone into professions or trades. The promise afforded them by a prospective agricultural life was not enough. And for the working-man it is the same. He looks for some better ending for his life than being "on the rates." That is at present what he usually has to look forward to in old age if he remains what we should term, at home in the Bush, a "rouse-about"—that is to say, an unskilled country labourer. And so the cities are becoming overrun with him, and cannot do for him all that he has expected.

The writer is too ignorant of the details of English social questions to venture on an opinion of his own, but it does seem that if

in new countries like Australia and New Zealand it has become an accepted fact that a remedy should be found for the unemployed question, by making it as profitable as possible for the working classes to settle on the land, it should apply with still more force to England. The resumption by the country of large estates in which good land is more or less locked up, and their throwing open to settlement—in such a way that the landholders on a small scale might become *landowners*, — seems to be a suggested remedy for some of the poverty of England which has "something in it." It certainly has been proved to have something in it in newer countries.

However, one does not know. All that one knows, as anyone might know who has seen it, is that England is potentially enormously wealthy in its lands. Her main wealth may not lie in them as in her trade, but the strength of her manhood is bound up with them. The city man may be a clever fellow, but he has not got the solid stamina of the countryman. And so what seems most apparent is that if England wants to cultivate a race of the sort that made her England, she will have to, even while not neglecting the shop and the workshop, give a little more sympathetic attention to the farm.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PLAYGROUND

THERE is a gibe most constantly hurled at the English, emanating, as far as one remembers, from their bosom friends the French, which is wholly and altogether a libellous misstatement of fact. But it has got to be so universally believed—even half-believed by the English themselves—that one almost hesitates to contradict it. It is the old proverb about the sadness with which the Englishman takes his pleasure. Whoever was responsible for it must have, we cannot help thinking, mistaken the respective meanings of two adverbs —"sadly" and "seriously"; or possibly he meant to say "solemnly." But, in England, at any rate, sadness is in no sense synonymous with solemnity or seriousness. The Englishman's most striking characteristic of mannerism is his ability to be pleased without grinning. He may be as jubilant as a cock-sparrow, or as miserable as a bandicoot on a burnt ridge,[1]

[1] An Australian expression denoting extreme unhappiness.

but he does not vary his facial expression very much. Nobody can hide the lines of care and trouble which are sometimes printed on the features as vouchers of genuine affliction; but it is not often that the Englishman feels himself compelled to shriek the joy that is within him, or to howl about the enthusiasm he may feel. Even when the latter is absolutely necessary, he contents himself with a mere unintelligible noise (hip! hip! hurrah!),—he does not scream a hope that anybody or anything may "live." Perhaps it is for such reasons as this that European critics have assumed that he is unhappy in his happiness, that he begrudges himself a little cheerfulness, or that he finds his pleasure a bore, and his amusement a weariness.

But he does not. He is intensely serious about amusing himself. He is so serious at times that he forgets he has started out with the intention of amusing himself, and turns what should be relaxation and recreation into wearying hard work. That anyone should be taking a pleasure "sadly" who makes such a keen and exacting business of it, as the Englishman does, is past belief. It is almost incredibly unnatural. And more than anything else, it is to be believed that the Englishman does very little that is not entirely natural to him.

Take the serious way in which he regards cricket. It has become not a mere pastime; to many Englishmen it is an absorbing passion. But he is not saddened by it. The very earnestness with which he follows it, whether he play himself or not, is evidence that he is not. He only takes it with the indomitable seriousness that is his, makes a kind of religion of it, and sometimes becomes a fanatic about it. And football as well—he goes to enormous trouble and expense in the serious cultivation of it as an art, spares no time or money in following it up, and is prepared to do almost anything in supporting the particular club which claims his loyalty. He almost has come to regard his sports as of more importance than the means which he should take to ensure his national existence. But he is in no sense saddened by his devotion to them. It is the seriousness—the utterly absorbing seriousness of the way in which he follows them up that has earned for him a reputation for amusing himself lugubriously. The playground in which he disports himself has nothing at all about it of a churchyard atmosphere. It is only that he is so intent that he forgets to smile.

The Englishman has a wonderful capacity for play. It has often been a reproach to us at

home in Australia that we are too devoted to amusing ourselves. One doubts whether such a reproach could come with fitness from England. We certainly do make holiday fairly extensively, and on most possible occasions, but we make it with no greater zest than it is made in England. Often, in Sydney and Melbourne, one has wondered, in crowded trams or trains, whether a test match or a race meeting were really worth the trouble and labour involved in getting there, and why there were so many other fools intent upon doing so likewise. But since one has been to see the Derby, and a "cup final" at the Crystal Palace, one has come to regard Australian enthusiasm for spectacular sport as being of a very mild and lukewarm description. There, as a rule, we follow it up with the least inconvenience to ourselves and our comfort. Here, the people literally fight and struggle to attend at the more important events in the particular branch of sport which absorbs their interests. They make such attendance an immense obligation upon themselves. It is the serious, devoted, uncompromising attention which they give to their play that most impresses an outlander.

But it is this very serious attention that makes for two great evils. In the first place, is the unutterable evil of professionalism in

sport. In the second, is the danger that the absorbing devotion the English have for such games of skill and endurance as cricket and football is apt to make them careless of the necessity for being more devoted to the skilful playing of the greater game of national defence. How hackneyed has this subject become—and yet how imperatively it forces itself upon the attention of any looker-on! It is one of those disagreeable things as to which you cannot possibly be blind in England. It is, perhaps, not a little bound up with the first of these two evils.

In a previous chapter one has unfeignedly congratulated England upon the fact that the real professional is absent from her political life. It is a pity that the same congratulations cannot be offered on account of her sporting life. But unfortunately they cannot. Professionalism taints English sport through and through. It not only makes a trade of a game, but it destroys the wholesome democratic nature of every game it touches, and evolves class distinctions where there should exist none but those that are conferred by skill. Because the paid cricketer, for instance, is recognised as a necessity, it curiously happens that matches are reported in the newspapers as being played by people with surnames, and people with "Mister"

in front of their surnames, thus introducing into cricket a snobbishness that should have no connection with it or any other game. It also brings into both cricket and football the influence of the Long Purse. Can it be argued fairly that a county team really represents its county when it is permissible to hire experts from without its borders to fight its battles for it? Such a possibility puts county cricket very much on the same footing as Atlantic yacht racing, in which success is altogether dependent upon the extent of the individual banking accounts of those who participate in it. The richest county club has, in the same way, incontestably an advantage. It may be, of course, that the richest county does not always succeed,—but with professional cricket it undoubtedly has a much better chance of a victorious season than it would without. If there were room here, one might go on enumerating through many paragraphs the disadvantages to play of professional play, in all the varied fields which go to make up the Englishman's national playground, but it would possibly make too long a list. It is not, of course, that one contends that it would be altogether possible to do away with professionalism of a kind in sport altogether. But it is a pity that it should be openly recognised in England,—and

that it has a harmful effect on true sport one fancies that there are very few Englishmen, giving an attention as serious to the ethics of games as they give to their performance, who will be prepared to deny. And altogether one believes that the evil of professionalism is largely due to the ultra-seriousness of the Englishman about his games.

Perhaps the English reader is very tired of having it said to him in print that he gives too much attention to the propulsion of balls by means of bats, boots, rackets, and metal-shod sticks, whilst he neglects to cultivate the art of accurately propelling bullets from a rifle. Well, it has been said and written very frequently by a good many people lately,—but it is the writer's humble opinion that it cannot be said frequently enough. And therefore he takes the liberty of saying it once again here.

Four years ago there was a good deal of scornful dissent manifested in England with the opinions of an Englishman who had the courage to reproach his countrymen, in verse, with the fact that, after a long and bitter experience of their own unpreparedness for war, they had speedily come again to content their souls

> "With the flannelled fools at the wicket or the muddied oafs at the goals."

The blasphemy of such an allusion to the serious occupation of the cricketer and the footballer sent a thrill of horror through the breast of the serious sportsmen of England. Whether it was true or not, and, if it was true, to what extent it might matter, did not worry him very much. It was the horrible irreverence that could prompt such an utterance that struck him most forcibly. He could not understand anyone saying such a thing as that. And he has given fairly clear indication since, of the fact that he did not want to understand it.

The neglect of rifle-shooting for cricket and football is one of those things which stands as a reproach to English sport. There are a few earnest, far-seeing men at present strenuously endeavouring to get their fellow-countrymen to take it up with the seriousness and devotion which they have for games. Perhaps it is only a matter of a little time before their efforts shall have met with the success they deserve. It is altogether to be hoped that another war will not be required to illustrate the points of their preaching. But it is wholly true, one believes, that until every Englishman who plays a game comes to regard rifle-shooting as one of the best of games,—and sets its idol upon as high an altar as he has built up for the

other idols that he worships in the precincts of his playground,—he will be lacking in a true realisation of the true sporting spirit. When he has come to do so, he will have learned to counteract what there is of evil in his too serious acceptance of sport as the "end" and not the "means."

But, all in all, the playground is what makes the Englishman. Even if he takes it possibly a little too solemnly and seriously, it is a wonderful source of strength to him. What has been said above is in no way intended to attempt any detraction from its great value. It is only to say that if the Iron Duke's remark as to Waterloo having been won in the playing fields at Eton was in any sense true, it is to be believed nowadays that England's next Waterloo is to be won "on the ranges." It is only to hint that so much as this contains of truth is perhaps apt to be overlooked to-day by even the Englishman who regards his games as sources of training rather than means of livelihood or speculation. The real influence of the playground remains sound enough at its core. It is the danger that his too earnest devotion to the worship of the gods which he has set up in it may blind him to its real uses, that seems to threaten. He is so serious about it

that he may misuse it unwittingly. That he should ever abandon it in any degree at all is hardly to be feared. But he might possibly make a better use of it than he does to-day.

CHAPTER XIX

THE GRIEVANCES

AT its beginning, it is to be announced that this chapter is a chapter of trivial grievances. It is to deal with several minor aspects of English life which are really hardly worth mentioning, and are by the English themselves so generally accepted as normal conditions of being, that it is the Australian reader alone who will find any cause for astonishment in the fact that reason for them should exist.

Not once, but many times, have books and newspaper articles of English authorship assured us that we are the unhappy possessors of several national weaknesses. For instance, we have been told that we eat too much meat; that we drink too much tea; that our statistics relating to population suffer for want of attention; that we are too fond of holiday making; that we do not provide during the years of plenty for the season of famine; that we are inclined to be boastful; that we speak through our

noses; that, in short, we are not altogether up to the mark in several little ways peculiarly our own. And, as a matter of fact, we are not. Wherefore we retort, more or less relevantly, to the effect that the Englishman is Another, and proceed to enumerate points in which he does not come up to our own admirable standard. Of course, they are very much more numerous and serious than those he is able to bring forward against such creatures of perfection as we undoubtedly are. That goes without saying. It is well known that he beats his wife, murders his children, forges the signature of his wealthy uncle to a bogus will, starves his poor to death, oppresses the heathen, sets aside a special part of his capital city for the perpetration of huge fraud, and says, "We-ah-ly now," when he ought to say, "No fear." We know all about him. The villain and his villainies are perfectly familiar to us. He is utterly unable to impose upon such keen and discerning customers as we are.

It is many years since one of the members of a cricket team of aboriginals, brought over to England from Australia, summed up the cardinal failings of the Englishman in one terse phrase, as applied to an English umpire, who had given one of his dusky comrades out, "leg before." He solaced his aggrieved and

reluctantly retiring "brother of the willow" by remarking contemptuously of the umpire: "Oh! you never mind that pfeller, Jacky. Baal know anything, that one. *He never been alonga sheep-station.*"

That is it. That is where the Englishman is wanting. That covers all his wife-beating, child-murdering, uncle-robbing iniquities. So we have always something apposite for the retort courteous, when he writes down our sins in a book, or in the columns of a newspaper. "He never been alonga sheep-station."

But there are three matters as to which one cannot refrain from enlarging in this chapter. They are not quite such dreadful matters as ignorance of the ways of sheep-stations, but they are dreadful enough.

In the first place, the Englishman has, in his literature and his speech, led us to believe that he is above all things a devotee of the bath. In the second, he has boasted for about a century that he will never, never be a slave. And in the third, he has sought to convince us that his country is the one country in the world where we may rely upon finding a bounteous liberality in matters of good cheer. None of which three pretensions he has any right to—as you shall see.

One of the very first hardships which an

Australian coming to London is called upon to face is that of having to pay for his bath. At first he regards the item in the hotel bill which relates to his morning ablutions as some sort of pleasantry upon the part of his landlord. "This is a subtle joke," he says to himself, "of which, being new to the country, I do not at first grasp the point. Perhaps some opulent fellow has come over from the other side, with a cheque 'to knock down,' and has offered to pay for the water he uses, and so now they make a point of 'poking it' at all Australians. Yes, that must be it. Rather funny." But when he goes smilingly to the desk of the landlord's hireling, and points to the item knowingly, with an expression meaning "Yes, very good joke; you can take it out now—I've seen it," he is astonished to find that it is in deadly seriousness that the proprietary asks him to pay for keeping himself clean! He is so astonished that he pays meekly and goes away, and thereafter concludes that the using of baths must be regarded in England as a luxury not unlike the mounting of a crest upon the panels of a carriage. It stupefies him a little. Ever afterwards he scans his hotel bills suspiciously, in order to see whether he has been fined for wiping his feet on the door-mat, or using the ash-tray in the smoking-room.

And thence onward he gradually comes to regard the Englishman's tub as a fraud and a delusion. For even in little comfortless back-block inns in the Never-Never he has been used, if there were any water to be had at all, to regard the bath as a *sine qua non*. That in an enormous palace of a hostelry he should actually find discouragement towards personal cleanliness he can hardly at first believe. But it is so. He half persuades himself that it is only a matter of time before some such item as "1500 extra cubic feet of air in bedroom, one-and-sixpence," gets itself inserted in English hotel bills. And he packs his bags and goes to find rooms.

"Yessir, fine old 'ouse, sir. Very hairy rooms, sir," says their proprietor. "Built be Lord Durtimann, sir, an' hoccupied by 'im for many years. Baths, sir? Yessir—come hupstairs, sir. Oh! we only charges thruppence for baths, sir. In 'ere, sir." And, entering a "hairy" bedroom, he gropes below the bed and pulls out—a milk dish, about a yard in diameter and five inches deep. "Bathroom? Oh no, sir! All the gents 'as baths, if they wants them, sir, in their bedrooms. Thought there was a bathroom, sir? Oh no, sir! you see the 'ouse ain't built for one. Hi doubt w'ether you'd find one anyw'ere in the square,

DURNING LIBRARY, KENNINGTON CROSS.

sir." And so the pilgrim seeks bathrooms sadly and unavailingly elsewhere.

After a month or so, he begins to realise that the bathroom is not regarded as an essential in every house in England. And then, when he meets a fellow-countryman, he says, "Look here, old man, it's all dashed rot about the Englishman and his tub. If he was so jolly keen about it those pirates who keep the hotels wouldn't want to make you pay for baths, and there'd be more bathrooms in private houses." When he's writing home he mentions that "they don't go much on baths here." And always after, he treasures up a slight feeling of resentment against England for being so poorly provided with the means of keeping itself clean. It is one of his grievances. It always rankles a little, that the Englishman should have acquired a reputation to which he had no right.

For the second grievance—the bold Briton has declared it impossible that he should ever, ever be a slave,—whereas he is very much a slave to what he designates the tipping system. It certainly is a "system," and a very elaborate one. And the curious thing about it is that nearly everyone objects to and everyone submits to it. You do both yourself. But you never become used to it, and always regard it

—as you regard being called upon to pay for a bath—as a system of extortion.

A firm which caters all over London, both for the "classes" and the "masses," last year opened a huge new restaurant in a certain important thoroughfare, and the flourish of trumpets with which it announced, through the press, the main and alluring feature of its enterprise was pitched in the very highest of high keys. Nothing like its splendid regard for the people of England had, it said, ever been seen before. It had built at great expense a huge mirrored and gilt palace of an eating-house which would accommodate two thousand people, all sitting down at once. Its tariff was to rival the extremely moderate tariffs of those foreign restaurants in and about Soho, which do such a roaring trade, are so wholly excellent—both as to the quality of the food supplied and the cooking of it—and to which most Australians and Americans resident in London inevitably gravitate when they have become aweary of the robbery and extortion practised at the more fashionable resorts of "diners-out."

But that was not all. It was going to upset London. With a ruthless disregard of tradition it announced itself as being about to inaugurate a new era.

Lo and behold!—you were not to tip the waiter! Only those who have ever lived the life of bachelordom in London can properly realise to what an extent such an announcement was calculated to root up the foundations of the Lower Thames valley.

It was tremendous. Just think of it! A firm whose latest balance-sheet showed a dividend of over thirty per cent. was going to pay its employees a living wage! Truly, the millennium seemed to be at hand,—when a London catering-house could do such a thing. One could hardly realise that the announcement could be true. But it was. It actually was.

The tip to the waiter is little known in Sydney and Melbourne. You go into your hotel or *café*, and you eat and drink, and when you have finished eating and drinking you pay your bill and go away, and no man glares hatred and malevolence after you because you have not given him twopence. If by any chance your benevolence has got the better of your good sense, you have presented him with a shilling, or a sixpenny-piece, and he has frankly regarded you as something of a fool. Had you given him coppers he would probably have handed them back politely with a suggestion, that you might one day need them yourself. He has his wage, and on his wage he is

dependent for his living. He is a free man who does not need to fawn on anyone for the means to exist. Like you who grow wool, or you who traffic in it, or you who do clerkly work for hire, he gives his labour for money which he earns. There is no need for him to wax eloquent as to weather conditions, or to hand you your hat with a cringing smile, or your umbrella with a smirk, or to assist you officiously with your overcoat when you are in no need of assistance. He can afford to treat you with a fine independence. If he is uncivil, or neglectful, he knows that he may be reported, and lose his place. So he gives you civility and attention as his part of the contract with his employer. There is seldom any afterthought as to what amount of coin of the realm you may reward him with for doing what he knows, and you know, he has already been paid for doing. He just does it, and you pay your reckoning, conscious that a percentage of your payment will go to support him.

But in London—indeed, in all England and on the Continent—it is different. It is you who must support the waiter. It is you who must provide the ways and means of having the food delivered to you which you have purchased. The proprietor of your restaurant sees no reason whatever as to why the

waiter's services should be recompensed from the amount which he receives from customers, charge he never so highly. The waiter looks after you, and you must look after the waiter, or be prepared for neglect, and scorn, and all uncharitableness upon that worthy's part. Fail to give him the fag-end of your change after settling with him, and see how warmly he will welcome you when next you come, and how devoted he will be to your interests. Just you persist in not tipping him, and see how you will get on. Try it when you come to London.

No, 'Enery and Halfred, of "The Bottle with Seven Necks," where William the Conqueror used to take his "roast, boiled, and bitter," depends upon your coppers, and you must not, of your charity, forget it. He looks to you to support the little place south of the river, or northward of St. Paul's, where everything that is anything to him exists, and he has not the least idea that you regard him scornfully for so doing, or think that he is by way of being a poor type of Englishman. If you were to suggest such a thing to him he might send for one of those omnipotent men in blue, who would in all likelihood regard you as insane, and haul you before two doctors. It is well and long established that 'Enery and Halfred should levy a tax upon you, and collect it them-

selves, and if you object you are an anarchist and a rebel, with no belief in King, or Church, or State. A few years ago you would have been a pro-Boer.

It is well known that the waiters in many London restaurants pay highly for the privilege of waiting. To so great an extent has the tipping system become established and exploited as a business, that there are few well-known and popular houses of refreshment where any wages at all are paid to waiters, whilst there are not a few where waiters pay wages to proprietors. The tip is so sure, and so universal, that, like the old-time tax-gatherer, the waiter can afford to pay handsomely for his place. In some it is said that the head-waiter buys his position from the proprietor, and guarantees to provide all the attendance required. So, if you come to think of it, the turnover in tips at such establishments must be fairly considerable. The tax is not a heavy one. Seldom are you expected to leave more than a few pence. But it is an unjust one, and so the necessity—and there is a necessity—of paying it rankles in the bosom of the new-comer to London, until he becomes acclimatised and used to this and other impositions. And under it all he thinks, and perhaps thinks rightly, that he can discern no insignificant

indication of a phase of national degeneracy. If you come to look at it at all in this way, it makes you a little bit sad—that is, if you have ever had any ideas as to the dignity of labour.

For in England the scramble for the odd copper, and the subserviency which seeks to earn it, is one of the most striking details of the social system. If you come from a new country—where there is more general equality than here, and less class distinction, and where no one touches his hat to another because he happens to be a little bit better dressed than himself—you never grow quite used to it. It is one of the small disappointments of England, and an aspect to which you can never take kindly.

Perhaps it is the custom of centuries, but somehow one cannot realise that in the London of long ago—the London which spoke its mind openly to unjust kings, was ever ready to manifest its sturdy independence, and whose people were intolerant of overmuch patronage of the sort which implies, "You may live because I smile"—such poor spirit existed. You see it everywhere to-day. Ask the way, of a workingman in the street,—he expects some copper. Pay a cabman in silver in excess of his legal fare,—he will think you mean if there is not an odd twopence or threepence added to the

amount. Let a guard on a railway station open the carriage door, and he will touch his hat in expectation of acknowledgment in minor coin. After a while you will begin to doubt your faith in the good nature of human nature, and to think that London divides itself into classes that either give or receive twopence; that nothing can be done for mere civility's sake; that the trifling services which you have hitherto regarded as any man's right to ask, and his privilege to give, are really valuable and marketable. (But you will realise also—what may, indeed, be the cause of it all—that the struggle for life is very bitter here, and that at home in Australia we have no conception of what it really means.)

And the third grievance—it is a terrible and sad one. How difficult it is to record the story of shame and misery, only those can say who have ever had experience of it. The writer sets it down here now in solemn black and white—and the blushing English printer will set it "up" in type—in order that those of his countrymen who voyage hither in the aftertime may not delude themselves with unrealisable hopes, that they may not place too much reliance on that false reputation which England has acquired as a country of free and hearty hospitality. It is a sad and wretched thing to

have to write of any land. But how wretched and sad it is to be compelled to write it of the Motherland of the New Nations, none but they may know who have understood its awful truth. That it may be believed in Australia is hardly likely. Nevertheless, at the risk of adding to his reputation, the writer ventures to publish it abroad. And the awful truth is this: When you go to buy a drink, they do not hand you the bottle. *They measure it out.*

CHAPTER XX

THE OLD AND THE NEW

THROUGHOUT these pages it may have been gathered by the English reader that an outlander can find little to comfort him in the point of view regarding his own country which is held by the majority of Englishmen. To tell the truth, he finds it hardly a view-point at all. In all manner of curious little ways he is reminded, during the first few months of his life in England, that he might just as well say he came from the moon as from Australia. One could not make any such sweeping statement as to English ignorance of our affairs, as have been made by some of our leading men when they have returned home after a visit to this country; but it may be said, with a fair amount of certainty, that the average Englishman's knowledge—even that of the most rabid Imperialist—as to the daughter nations, is curiously meagre and misleading.

But there is one compensation to be con-

sidered in reflecting upon this. The Australian's knowledge of England is not encyclopædic. Although, as a rule, he is better educated in matters outside his own immediate sphere than the Englishman of his kind, and more in touch with the wider life, he is in many ways as ignorant of the real Englishman as the latter is of him. If he has never seen England, he is certainly as much out of touch with its spirit as the Englishman is with his. He is as little able to understand the mental processes of an old land as an old is to comprehend those of a new one. On the whole, it is natural that Australia should know more about England than England does of Australia, since England is the focus of all the lines of communication that lead from the Outer to the Inner Empire; but it is only possible for him to realise how little he knows when he visits the latter for the first time. And it is not a matter which he realises at once, or even speedily.

In Australia we mainly rely for news of the far-off old world upon a cable service which suffers under disabilities. The columns of telegraphic matter the great dailies publish are as many in number as those of the best of the English journals. The matter they contain is a condensation of the news that comes by wire to London from every part of the world, and it

is a fairly correct summary of all that is going on. The essential news of the late war in the Far East was, for instance, although published in Australia a day later than in London, quite as full as it was possible to find it in any single London paper. But on general topics it has to be of such a kind as will suit all readers. For the service is "pooled." All the most important daily newspapers of the capital cities are supplied by joint arrangement from a common centre in Fleet Street. When it is remembered that the press rate for cablegrams from London to Sydney, or Melbourne, comes to a shilling a word, it does not seem unnatural that such a combination should exist. From the point of view of the newspaper proprietors, it is almost an inevitable one. But, there being two sides to a question, it is not possible that each should be adequately represented, when both are necessarily trimmed to make a compromise suitable for readers having opinions on either side. Preferential Trade is a good case in point. News concerning the progress of the fiscal campaign in England goes to Free Trade and Protectionist papers in Australia through the same channel, and it must therefore necessarily be of a somewhat colourless description. Were there an independent service, representing each aspect of the question, the

knowledge of the Australian reader as to British feeling upon it would be infinitely more complete than it is at present. And on many other matters, both of politics and general information, the result would be the same. There is a fine opening in Australia for enterprising journalism, backed by sufficient capital,—but it will be easily recognised that the latter must be amply sufficient.

The combination of the newspapers in this respect is one reason why Australia is not in touch with England to the extent which is desirable. But it is perhaps a minor one, compared with two others—native Australian provincialism, and the immense distance which separates the two countries. Of the two, which are more or less related, the latter, perhaps, is the one which counts for most, but the former has no little bearing upon the subject. It is not a thing to write which one can suppose will altogether be agreeable to Australian readers, but it is a matter wholly unrealisable in Australia itself. It is not to say that parish or county predilections count for anything, or even to emphasise State provincialism,—what one drives at is that Australian thought, the Australian journalism which reflects it, and Australian ideals are introspective. We are occupied with the affairs within our gates, con-

tent with ourselves and our domestic policies, satisfied with the contemplation of matters near at hand—and a little blind to the fact that we have a place in the world, and that the world outside our continent should therefore count for more with us than it does. It is only quite recently that Australia has, for instance, awakened to the fact that she ought to be watchful in the Pacific, that the islands themselves are stepping-stones across the waters which it may be worth her while to render secure against the possibility of being made use of by a possible enemy. It is only to-day that she has been awakened to the truth that the developments in the Far East have dragged her closer up to Europe, and the complications of European international politics, than she ever supposed she could be dragged—if she cared to think about it at all.

And it is the great distance which lies between our New Land and the Old Lands which, one would think, must account for this happy but futile self-absorption. Mail contracts of thirty days, and six weeks' voyaging from London to Melbourne or Sydney, are facts which speak for themselves. We have lived in a world of our own, and have grown careless of the world outside. Although the continental Australian is not quite so narrowly confined in

his own prejudices as the insular Englishman, he is not always ready to come outside of them. On his side he is almost as much accountable for the lack of a real *entente cordiale* between New and Old, as is the islander of the North Sea. We are out of touch with England to an extent which all the talk and writing of "Imperialism" (unhappy word) cannot cover. And the mere fact that a great many Englishmen still allude to Australia as a "Dependency" is fairly significant that England is out of touch with us. Whatever opinions we may hold as to the shortcomings of England in this respect, however, it is nothing more than fair to recognise that there are shortcomings to be reckoned with upon our side also.

In the commencement of this final chapter allusion is made to the lack of knowledge of the Outland which surprises the outlander in England, and perhaps one may be allowed to return to the subject.

It is not too much to say that, to the great bulk of Englishmen, Australia is practically a *terra incognita*. This is possibly rather a hackneyed statement, but, nevertheless, to anyone who goes about with his eyes and his ears open in London, the truth of it is apparent. Generally, it is not the case that the English-

man knows any more of any of the other "out-back" territories of the Empire; but of South Africa, because of its war, and of Canada, by reason of its "boom," he has got to acquire some kind of elementary knowledge. Mr. Seddon and "F. C. G.," in the *Westminster Gazette*, have advertised New Zealand, but, of Australia, the opinions which the ordinary City man and the average man of the "middle class" holds in London, are not less absurd than they are unreal.

During the war in South Africa, Australia—in common with Canada and New Zealand—got to be known as a place whence men who could shoot and ride might be drawn at the rate of five shillings a day. A little later on, the inception of the Commonwealth drew cursory attention to a vague place on the world's edge whither had been despatched a Governor-General and an assorted sample of the English army. Then went the Prince of Wales to open the Commonwealth Parliament in Melbourne. All these historic events interested the average Englishman, as new items for the time being. In none of them was he so interested as he was in his Education Bill or his Licensing Act. There is not much outside Great Britain and Ireland—unless it be a war, with picturesquely sanguinary details—which

does attract the regard of your typically insular Englishman. The world beyond England has for him very little that is worth considering. Once he has "gone abroad," as it is put, all this is changed—he realises that beyond his horizon there is yet another horizon, and "quite" possible chances of there being another beyond that. But of the hundreds of thousands—rather, many millions—in England who do the same thing every day, except Sunday, and who will continue to do it until they die, it is justifiable to say that farther than their noses, they do not see very much, and that of the New Nations—winning or losing or struggling beyond the seas—comparatively little is known. It is the peculiarity of the English middle-class temperament to be quite satisfied with its environment, and to be aware of, or recognise, no condition of existence other than its own as being worth consideration. And so Australia, even a little more than other lands, since it is so far away, is unknown to the mass of Englishmen, and is of very small account. What his morning paper tells him he takes as Gospel. And some of his morning papers tell him the strangest things imaginable.

Once, last year, there came across the cables news that a number of civil servants, some temporary and some permanent, had been re-

trenched by the Government of New South Wales. Straightway a certain London daily paper published a leading article drawing attention to what the writer was pleased to designate a "crash" in that State. The reader, ignorant of any of the political or social conditions in New South Wales, was led to infer that something very serious had happened, something involving our credit and our prosperity in a condition of common ruin. The newspaper in question was, to say the least of it, quite proud of the manner in which it said, "I told you so." Now, this kind of thing, in itself, does not matter very much,—but that newspaper has about three-quarters of a million of readers, and at least half a million of its readers take its dicta seriously. And, however sensational and almost maliciously libellous such occasional statements as to Australian affairs are, the fact is always to be reckoned with that they will be very largely believed in England, and especially in the Metropolis—which, for Australia's sake, is rather deplorable.

To do the London daily press justice, however, it may be said that the comment of *The Times* and *The Morning Post* on Australian affairs is generally sincere and correct. But usually there is a real ignorance which is more than surprising. The newspapers, of course,

echo public opinion, or sections of it, and even if one judges from the newspapers alone there is a lack of general knowledge of life and conditions in Australia which strikes a newcomer at once. And it is the more remarkable in comparison with the fairly general knowledge which the public here possess as to Canada. Thinking over it in this light,—one is led to find a reason for the difference. The fact is that Canada, besides being much closer to England than Australia, has been for the last few years ungrudgingly and adequately advertised. You see posters on hoardings, and expensive advertisements in newspapers, and elaborate offices in such places as Whitehall, with shop front windows, where productions of the Dominion are boastfully displayed. We have nothing resembling such advertisement of Australia. The Government of the Dominion spends a large amount of money in making the country and its wares familiar to the British public, but there can be no question as to such a procedure "paying." Perhaps in time we will learn to do likewise; and then it may be possible that to the man in the grill-room, in the suburban train, or on the top of the bus, —or even to the leader writers of great London papers,—Australia will not always remain so comparatively unknown a country as it is to-day.

It is hardly to be expected that the English newspapers should devote overmuch attention to such very distant "outsiders" as ourselves, but something more than an occasional inaccurate paragraph, or a meagre telegram, would do much to strengthen the tendency of a real and strong relationship to establish itself between old and new. Newspapers, as has been said, of course give their readers in the first place what their readers ask for, but there are some which, in spite of the "New Journalism," still take themselves seriously as moulders of public opinion. What one only laments is that such journals do not seem to consider that the strengthening of the ties that bind our race together all over the world can only be properly realised when the different branches of it come thoroughly to understand one another. If they did so, they would make a greater feature of efforts to educate their own people as to their relations oversea. One has admitted that the oversea cousin might advantageously do so too; but, after all, the English of England have more influence in the matter than the scattered English of the world.

It may seem that the necessity for this better and more intimate knowledge of one another is exaggerated here—that it matters very little

whether the old and the new have clear and plain perceptions of one another's ways and idiosyncrasies, or whether they mutually respect one another's standpoints—since it has been more or less well demonstrated that the children can walk unaided by the mother, and that the mother has not yet grown so old that she must either depend upon the support of the children, or find refuge in the poorhouse of the weaker nations. But it is a strong household whose members are on good terms with, appreciate both the strengths and the weaknesses of, and are able to make mutual allowances and adjustments for one another — a very much stronger one than that in which each seeks an individual way, even though the whole is more or less loosely bound together. If it has a firm sense of mutual trust and interdependence it is far more likely to be able to pay the rent, keep out the burglar, and maintain the repair of the roof, than if each dweller in it has different ideas, or no ideas at all, of the character, leanings, and capabilities of the remainder.

There is a good deal to be given and a good deal to be taken between an Old Land and a New Land which are bound by ties of sentiment and common origin. With the two, concerning which the foregoing pages have had to

do, there are a few as to which it may be permissible to particularise. For one thing, and on one side, England should give up the use of the word "dependencies," and even try to find some other comprehensive term than that of "colonies." We have outgrown the dependent stage, and the term "colony" has almost become obsolete. It is true that under existing conditions we are "dependent" upon English naval defence; but it might be quite possible for us to become as independent as, say, a South American Republic. What if we were to be invaded by Japan or China or Germany or France? We could at least make some sort of a fight to preserve our nationality. It is the idea of "dependency" that galls. Call the attachment to the Old Land an "alliance" if you will,—but don't offend us by inferring that we are "dependent" upon you. We are almost as sensitive upon this point as a boy going to school would be if he were to discover a tendency upon his mother's part to escort him thither. What are known as "Crown colonies" might aptly be termed dependencies of England; but great continental communities which make their own laws, breed their own law-givers, and conduct their own legislatures can hardly be classed in the same category. It may seem, perhaps, that these

ideas are merely trivial and querulous; but it must be remembered in England that our newly acquired nationality is very dear to us. We may be in the adolescent stage of assumptive omniscience; but even a boy of nineteen must be humoured a little if you would make a man of him. Treat him, even if only by courtesy, as a man, and he will do his best to live up to a man's standards and ideals; but let him understand that you think he is still only fit for leading-strings, and the chances are that he will do some petulant, arrogant, reckless thing, just to show you that he is grown up. He might even be tempted to break away from the family circle. There was once, for instance, a boy of a nation across the Atlantic whom his mother attempted to force into the taking of unpleasant medicine called Taxation-without-Representation. He "took to the Bush" and set up for himself, and made a mighty success of it; but what a much mightier success he and the parental power might have made of it! They could have ruled the world together.

The British Empire is a mighty force for good; but it is not really to be controlled from Whitehall or Throgmorton Street,—or even from Finsbury Circus or Printing House Square. You must recognise the voice of the Outer Empire if the unity of the whole is to be

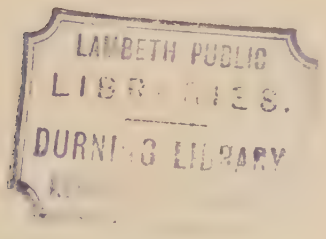
preserved. England has been, and is, constantly tempted to put too many fingers in the pie of the local affairs of the outlying English nations. The Chinamen on the Rand—but one will let that alone—and the desire to keep up the transportation of convicts to Australia sixty years ago, when Australia had protested, are cases in point. It must be recognised that we are sensitively independent, and that though most of us delight in, and respect, the idea of "alliance," we hate, and fear, and detest "dependency."

But we have our side to look to also. There is in Australia—and, no doubt, in other portions of the Outer Empire — an exaggerated distrust of the best intended acts of England. We are, as one has ventured to say, a little provincial in some respects, and rather apt to consider even those things that are undertaken for the benefit of the whole only in the light of the way in which they affect ourselves. It has become a tradition to distrust Downing Street. But it is really to be believed that Downing Street is more often benevolently than maliciously inclined. Its well-meant offices may be inconveniently grandmotherly at times,—but they are nevertheless well meant. For our part we should endeavour to recognise the good intention rather than the officious

interference,—at any rate to cultivate sufficient insight to enable us to recognise the real motive, even if we do not always tolerate the spoken word or the attempted act. To put everything into a few words: we need a better, deeper, and more sympathetic knowledge of England's real feelings towards herself and towards us; whilst she would do herself and us more even-handed justice if she could wholly come to regard us as having attained to the dignity of long trousers instead of knickerbockers, of cigarettes instead of lollies, and of the cultivation of the society of long-skirted girls instead of bread-and-butter misses. It may be taken in explanation of these metaphors —possibly a little mixed—that, being still young and inexperienced, we desire most strongly to be regarded as wearers of the *toga virilis*. And who shall blame us?

So one comes to the end of these rather incoherent pages, and if any reader has been patient enough to follow so far, it may be hoped that, even if as only the tracks of the wanderings of an outlander in fields sometimes too splendid for his vision, and too wide for his comprehension, they may not have been without a kind of interest. England is, indeed, too wide a field for a stroll. Every tussock

in it hides something strange and wonderful, every stone that one kicks up has another side. Between the hedges that girt it about there is an immense acreage to be investigated. Every square yard of soil produces something that grows and flourishes. Every root that is planted in it is deep set and old. It is a fair field, well cultivated. It is altogether, as we would say at home, sheep-to-the-acre country. What more might an Australian say to signify his respect for it?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